

NEW ORIENTATION

M.N. ROY

Lectures delivered at the Political Study Camp held at
Dehradun from May 8th to 18th, 1946

FOREWORD BY
PHILIP SPRATT

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The lectures which make up the contents of this book (first published in 1946) were delivered by M.N. Roy at a Political Study Camp of the Radical Democratic Party in May, 1946. This book is about the nature of the revolution of our time. Roy indicates a new orientation of the Socialist movement which in both its divergent branches—social democracy and communism—has reached a dead end. The direction in which it can look for remedies is organised democracy.

“No public man I know of, whether practical politician or mere observer”, writes Philip Spratt in the Foreword to the book, “has been a more consistently correct prophet than M.N. Roy.”

26. 7. 82

—S. Balwant

INTRODUCTION

To the Author

M.N. Roy was in many ways a unique person. He distinguished himself both as a man of action and as a man of thought. As a man of action, he was a devoted and dedicated revolutionary. As a man of thought, he developed into a profound and original social philosopher. He passed through three phases of political life. He started as an ardent nationalist, became an equally ardent communist and ended as a creatively active Radical Humanist. He built up and propounded the philosophy of Radical Humanism which may well become one of the most relevant philosophies of the future.

M.N. Roy was born on 21st March, 1887 in Brahmin family in a village in West Bengal. His original name was Narendranath Bhattacharya. He started taking part in underground revolutionary activity from the age of 14. He was involved in a number of political offences and conspiracy cases. Under the leadership of Jatin Mukherjee, he and his colleagues had prepared a plan for an armed insurrection for the overthrow of British rule. When the first World War commenced, a promise was secured from certain German agents for the supply of arms to Indian revolutionaries. In 1915, Roy went to Java in search of arms from the Germans. That plan having failed, he went a second time to Java for the same purpose. Thereafter he moved from country to country in pursuance of his scheme to secure German arms. Travelling under different names and with fake passports, he went from Java to Japan, from Japan to China, from China back to Japan, and reached San Francisco in June, 1916. Soon thereafter, the United States joined the World War, and Roy and some other Indians were charged in a conspiracy case instituted in San Francisco. Roy evaded the American police and managed to go to Mexico. By that time he had studied the basic books on socialism and communism

and had become a socialist. He joined the Mexican Socialist Party and became its organising secretary. He developed the party organisation and was elected its General Secretary. He converted the Socialist Party into the Communist Party of Mexico at an extra-ordinary conference. He thus became the founder of the first Communist Party outside Soviet Russia.

Roy was invited to Moscow to attend the Second Conference of the Communist International which was to be held in July-August, 1920. Roy reached Moscow prior to the conference and had discussions with Lenin on the national liberation movements in colonial countries like India and China. He differed with Lenin to some extent on the role of colonial capitalist classes in the movements for national liberation. On Lenin's suggestion, the Theses on the National and Colonial Question prepared by him and those prepared by Roy were both placed before the Second Conference of the Communist International for acceptance. Both the Theses were adopted by the Conference.

Roy came to occupy a high position in all the policy-making bodies of the Communist International. His main work at that time was to develop a Communist movement in India. He managed to send a number of Communist emissaries as well as literature to India. He has been recognised as the founder of the Indian Communist Party.

By 1927 Stalin had started his peculiar tactics for the liquidation or expulsion of all persons of independent thinking from the Russian Communist Party and the Communist International. Roy was one of the victims of those tactics. Roy wrote some articles for the press of what was known as the German Communist Opposition, criticising some of the policies adopted by the Communist International. For this offence he was turned out from the Comintern in 1929.

Roy now decided to go to India, although he knew that he would be arrested in India and would have to suffer a long term of imprisonment. He had been accused No. 1 in the famous Kanpur Conspiracy case of 1924, but could not be tried at that time because he was out of India. Roy was prepared to pay the price of a long period of incarceration in

order to participate in the Indian freedom movement.

Roy came to India *incognito* in December, 1930, was arrested in July, 1931 and was tried and sentenced to imprisonment of 12 years on the charge of conspiracy to overthrow the British Government. The sentence was reduced to six years in appeal.

After completing his sentence Roy was released from Jail on 20th November, 1936. Immediately thereafter, he issued a public appeal asking the people to join the Indian National Congress in millions. At the same time, he made it clear that the nationalist movement could not be strengthened unless it underwent a process of radicalisation and democratisation. He urged that the Indian National Congress should be built up from below by organising village and taluka Congress Committees and by vitalising them on the basis of a socio-economic programme of democratic freedom and radical agrarian reform. His idea was to develop the Indian National Congress with its net-work of village and taluka Committees, as a State within the State. The plan was that at an appropriate time, the Congress as the alternate State would give a call for convening a Constituent Assembly to frame the Constitution of free India and that the call would be the signal for the launching of the Indian revolution for democratic freedom.

On the basis of this radical programme, the followers of Roy started work in a large number of rural and urban centres in the country and within a couple of years they became a force to be contended with. In 1940, however, Roy and his followers had to part company with the Indian National Congress because of their difference on the issue of India's participation in the Second World War.

When the "phony" stage of the Second World War was over and the Nazi armies invaded France in April, 1940, Roy declared that the war had become an anti-Fascist War and that it was necessary for the very survival of democracy throughout the world that the war efforts of the Allied Powers should be supported at all costs. "If Fascism succeeds in establishing its domination over the whole of Europe", Roy declared, "then good-bye to revolution and good-bye to Indian freedom as well." He also confidently predicted that

“the defeat of Fascism will weaken imperialism” and would bring India nearer to the goal of democratic freedom.

The leaders of the Indian National Congress were, however, of a different opinion. They declared that the Indian people would support the war efforts only if the British Government agreed to set up a National Government in India with full autonomy over defence and foreign affairs. Roy disapproved of this offer of conditional support, because it implied that the war efforts would be opposed if the condition was not accepted. Roy argued that since the success in the anti-Fascist war was necessary for India's democratic freedom, we could not put conditions on our offer to help in achieving that success. On this issue Roy and his friends left the Indian National Congress and formed a separate party, called the Radical Democratic Party, in December, 1940.

As early as in December, 1942 Roy expressed the view that the Fascist Powers were going to be defeated in the war and that India would get national freedom as a result of the socio-economic changes which were taking place in Great Britain and the allied countries during the course of the anti-Fascist struggle. Roy's anticipations were proved correct. Historians are agreed that India got national freedom largely as a result of the liberating forces generated by the defeat of international Fascism.

When it became clear to him that the Fascist Powers were going to be defeated in the war, Roy switched his attention to the post-war reconstruction of India. He got prepared two basic documents in 1943 and 1944, one the “Peoples' Plan for Economic Development of India” and the second a “Draft Constitution of Free India”. The documents contained Roy's original contributions to the country's economic and political problems. Contrary to the economic thinking which was then current, Roy gave priority in the People's Plan to the development of agriculture and small scale industry. Production under the Peoples' Plan was to be for use and not for profit, and the objective of economic planning was to supply the primary needs of the people consisting of food, shelter, clothing, education and medicine. The Indian State, according to the Draft Constitution of Free India, was to be organised on the

basis of a countrywide net-work of Peoples' Committees having wide powers such as initiating legislation, expressing opinion on pending bills, recall of representatives and referendum on important national issues. The idea of Peoples' Committees subsequently popularised by Jayaprakash Narayan was mainly derived from Roy's Draft Constitution of Free India.

After the end of the war, Roy began to express his heretical views regarding Communism and Marxism. He differed with Marxism mainly on the role of ideas in human history and on the primacy of moral values. He summarised the philosophy which he was propagating in a number of Theses. These came to be known as the 22 Theses of Radical Humanism. He also issued a manifesto on New Humanism.

The 22 Theses outline the principles of the personal and social philosophy of Radical Humanism. The basic values of freedom, rationalism and morality are traced in the Theses to man's biological evolution. It is pointed out that quest for freedom and search for truth constitute the basic urge of human progress. The Theses emphasise the inseparability of political and economic freedom and indicate how the comprehensive ideal of political and economic freedom may be achieved.

Further discussion of the principles enunciated in the 22 Theses and the Manifesto led Roy to the conclusion that party politics was inconsistent with the ideal of democracy and that it was liable to degenerate into power politics. Roy was of the view that political power in a democracy should reside in primary organisations of the people such as People's Committees and should not be usurped by any political party. He was further of the view that particularly in countries like India, where a major section of the electorate was illiterate, party politics was bound to become an unprincipled scramble for power. These ideas led to the dissolution of the Radical Democratic Party in an All India Conference held in December, 1948 and the launching of a movement called the Radical Humanist Movement.

One of the new ideas developed by Roy during his Radical Humanist phase related to the concept of "cooperative

economy". In a cooperative economy, the means of Production would not belong either to the capitalist class or to the State. They would belong to the workers themselves. Roy was of the view that cooperative economy was superior to both capitalism and State ownership.

Roy was an intellectual giant. He was a constant source of original ideas. Throughout his life, he applied his great intellectual powers in the service of the ideal of freedom. Freedom was the basic inspiration and consuming passion of his entire life.

New Delhi.
31.5.1982

V.M. Tarkunde

PREFACE

On the occasion of a meeting of its Central Political Council, the Radical Democratic Party held a Political Study Camp at Dehradun, from May 8th to 18th, 1946. The fundamental principles of revolutionary political theories and practice were discussed. Having regard for the historical importance of the discussion, all the main speeches were taken down verbatim stenographically. My speeches are published in this book, as promised in the following letter addressed to Provincial Political Study Camps which were held soon after the Central Camp.

“Comrades,

“Fundamental questions underlying the principles and programme of our party were raised and discussed in the Dehradun Political Camp. Although they are not new, having been implied in the very organisation of the R.D.P., some comrades, nevertheless, appeared to be taken aback. Having returned possibly unconvinced, it would be natural for them to talk in such a manner as might create a measure of confusion in the ranks of the party.

“To carry the discussion down to the very bottom of the party, so that all possible misunderstanding might be obviated, it has been decided that members of the Central Secretariat together with other competent comrades present in the Camp, should in the near future visit the various provinces to address local Political Camps and membership meetings. I am sure that a full report of the discussions in the Dehradun Camp will clear all doubts. In addition to oral reports, by competent and leading members of the party, a full account of the proceedings of the Camp will be published as a book, as soon as possible. Therefore, I appeal to you not to make any hasty judgment on the basis of fragmentary reports, which may have reached you in the meantime. Comrades present in the Camp are likely to have been struck by some sentences or expressions, and passed them on to others. Out of the context of the whole-

precisely therefore it represents the scientific essence of Marxism, which is, that there is no absolute truth nor perfect knowledge. To insist that the deductions made from an analysis of the conditions of a century ago, hold good even to-day and will hold good for ever, is deviation from Marxism. On the contrary, Marxism is defended by those who realise that it should be revised in the light of changed conditions, and have the competence to do so. Radicalism proposes to rescue Marxism from degeneration into orthodoxy.

"Our party will have nearly half a year to examine its conscience and to test its faith. I have indicated the correct method of doing that. You shall have the fullest freedom to do your own thinking; only, please, think freely. Don't try to measure Radicalism by the standards of a less adequate, partially antiquated, philosophy. If that philosophy still satisfies you, you are free to stick to it; but again, do so frankly and honestly, which means, by accepting its political corollary, namely, the stupid and immoral behaviour of the Communist Parties.

"And don't demand that I should join you. The Radical Democratic Party is your party; if you are of the opinion that it has no fundamental reason to exist, and that opinion will follow logically from the rejection of the philosophical principles of Radicalism, you are entitled to liquidate it. But I am not your creation. You should not demand of me to think as you do. I shall continue my quest for freedom, wishing you luck in your new adventure."

The letter is reproduced because it summarises my speeches, and reflects the spirit of Radicalism as I understand it.

Other speeches will be published in a second volume. This method is adopted because, for technical reasons, all the speeches could not be published together before the Party Conference. This book should be read with the companion volume—*Radicalism*, by Professor Shib Narayan Ray—which is a systematic statement of all the aspects of radical thought and practice, as they took shape during the discussions in the Dehradun Camp.

FOREWORD

No public man I know of, whether practical politician or mere observer, has been a more consistently correct prophet than M. N. Roy. He has been dealing for twenty-five years with European, Indian, Chinese and world politics, and on hardly any major issue have his analyses and predictions been disproved by events. He is not however merely a writer. Probably many journalists could claim a fairly impressive record of predictions come true—if only because they have written so much that they are bound to make a lucky hit now and then. Roy has always written not as a journalist but as a political strategist concerned to know what is happening so that he can act appropriately. There is therefore nothing journalistic about his writing : no ornamentation, no tub-thumping, no irrelevancies, no evasion. It is functional writing, consistent and responsible; and that such writing should prove to be so unvaryingly right must be almost unique and is certainly noteworthy.

It is strange therefore that in a country so given to hero-worship, Roy should not have become a popular idol. Not that his merits as a political thinker are entirely unrecognised. They are admitted even by some who dislike him—people who would not be found dead with a copy of *Independent India* yet like to know what Roy is thinking about things. It is rather that the truth hurts, and hurts in particular nearly all those who control public opinion in India.

But there is another factor in this conspiracy to ignore a man who should be among the foremost in public life; and here is perhaps a justification for the present introduction. Roy, as I have said, is not a journalist. He writes for a limited circle who understands his style of thought and his background of ideas, and seems unconcerned whether he is intelligible outside it. The documents which make up this volume were all addressed to the Radical Democratic Party and presuppose its

special background. I believe they have an important message for a wider public, but their form is not such as to recommend them immediately to it. As a comparative newcomer to the party and its ideas I may be able to present a slant on the which will be more intelligible and acceptable than they are they stand.

As Laski has put it, there is everywhere a sense that mankind is on the march, but nobody seems very clear about the direction. It is obvious that we are in the middle of a revolution which embraces the whole world, but it is equally obvious that except in Russia people have not yet decided what is to be done about it. The outcome of a revolution is not laid down completely in advance. More or less total anarchy may persist for quite a long time, and at the end almost any kind of relative stability may be achieved, but unless it fulfils certain conditions that stability will break down again fairly soon and the process will be repeated until a stable state fulfilling the conditions is reached. We have passed through one such false stabilisation and its breakdown. The minimum conditions of stability are all that can be said with certainty about the outcome of a revolution. It would seem obvious that what we have to do is to ascertain these minimum conditions of stability and set about establishing them, but in fact it is not so easy as that. Mankind is still uncertain about its direction not because these conditions are not pretty generally understood but because, first, even after thirty years of world chaos they are still not easy to fulfil, and second—and this is where this book comes in—they do not give us a very complete guide, and as they stand they are not attractive enough.

The conditions, at least the controversial ones, can be put down as three, corresponding to the main ascertainable causes of the world breakdown. First we have to get rid of the instability arising out of clashing national ambitions, fears, etc., armed with the military power modern technology gives the larger nations. The complete solution is a world state. This is obviously still distant, but we can hope that an interim solution will be found if the other conditions are more or less adequately met. The second condition is that the instability arising from the working of inadequately controlled capitalist enterprise should be

curbed. After the great depression of fifteen years ago the necessity of this is not seriously questioned—even in America part of this necessity is admitted—but how it can be done is still strongly disputed. On the world scale it is still a central difficulty. The third condition is that the rising standard of life which the mass of men everywhere have come to expect as a result of technological developments should be realised fairly quickly. People know now that the old gross poverty and inequality are not inevitable, and unless they see progress toward their abolition there is going to be trouble. This is a separate condition from the second, because a remedy for the instability of capitalism might result in a freezing of economic progress. The Gandhian school aims at this. The Nazis would probably have achieved it. Nazism, had it conquered the world, would have been a full solution in the sense that it could have preserved stability for a long period by suppressing all discontent by force. Gandhism proposes to achieve this end by ideological means, i.e. persuading people not to desire a higher standard of life; but since it could not succeed in this, Gandhism in its pure form must be ruled out as a theoretically possible solution.

These three seem to be the main conditions which will have to be fulfilled by any solution of the world's problem, any outcome of the world revolution now going on. There will probably be very little dissent; indeed the three conditions are commonplaces of any discussion of the subject. Yet though they are so well understood there is strangely little enthusiasm for them. This is the framework within which the problem of this book is discussed.

India is part of the world and is involved in the revolution. Few looking at Indian conditions would care to deny this, yet that Roy always has this fact in mind is one of his graver crimes. He thinks in terms which apply first to the world as a whole, and then applies them to India with the necessary modifications, which are often not great. Now this deeply annoys many nationalists, who at bottom do not think of India as part of the world; they think India is unique, that foreign or "western" ideas do not apply to her, and presumably therefore that she happens to be having a private revolution of her own. This of course is but a way of saying that they want to confine

the revolution to its nationalist aspect, whereas Roy says that that is merely a small beginning, hardly worth calling a revolution at all. It is good in so far as it removes a mental obstacle to further changes: it satisfies the demand for equality of status among the nations, which has always been a main factor in nationalism; but clearly that does not get us very far.

It is interesting to notice that Roy has been saying this for more than twenty years. (See his speech "Our Future" in this volume). It is really a remarkable prophecy. He was clear on the main ideas years earlier, but the first I remember of it is an article in *The Communist International* about 1924, in which he pointed out that after the 1914-18 war and by 1923 the export of British capital to India had fallen to zero. This and other facts led him to infer that in due course a peaceful transfer of political power to Indian hands would take place—not through the magic of soul-force nor out of the democratic convictions of the British ruling class, but by virtue of a shift of economic power. And it followed that as regards the real problems of the revolution that transfer of power would mean nothing. The old order would remain; only the personnel at the top would change.

Now this was not just a brainwave, a bright idea for an article, to be forgotten when the next article had to be written. Roy thought about it seriously, discussed it with Lenin (who disagreed), and finally decided it was true, and stuck to it when probably nobody else in the world accepted it. He made it an essential part of his diagnosis of India's condition, and it helped to determine his attitude to all subsequent problems. In particular it helped to decide his attitude during the recent war, when after Churchill became Prime Minister in 1940 he saw that the consummation he had prophesied could take place at any time if only the Indian National Congress would adopt a responsible attitude to the war. He saw that Congress opposition to the war was not a principled opposition, but was what betting men call hedging, a provision against the eventuality of an Axis victory. He said that in the circumstances it was not merely permissible but obligatory for a sincere opponent of fascism to support the war, and therefore the Government, and he did so. Now that everything he predicted has taken place, and

the erstwhile incorruptible revolutionaries are cooperating to the limit, it would be only decent if those who condemned his cooperation would admit their error. But perhaps that is too much to expect.

India being part of the world and involved in the revolution like the rest of it, we have to consider the same sort of solutions to the problem it sets. One type of solution we can rule out without any doubt. That is the type we call fascist. Fascism is even theoretically a solution only in the form of the conquest of the world by a single fascist power. If two or more major powers went fascist they would fight, and that is no solution. In any case the solution is a highly undesirable one. But though we need not hesitate to reject Fascism, it needs some discussion.

In a sense it was fortunate that the fascist movement assumed early in its career the grotesquely repulsive form of Nazism. Thereby its natural sympathisers abroad were largely disarmed, every shred of decency left in the world was rallied against it, and its military defeat was rendered possible. For the essential purpose of Fascism can be served by a far more discreet type of reaction. It is perhaps not even necessary to fascist politics that it should produce the armed monopolistic party which was typical in Europe. In Japan nationalism was so strong that this could be dispensed with, and constitutionalism was preserved, though with a fairly severe police terror. On this point I have come to think that Roy was right again, though here he was not alone. He always said that the essential points about Fascism were that it was a reaction against the current decay of capitalism, an attempt to preserve its unequal distribution of property and avoid a socialist revolution, by increasing the power of the national state and subordinating the individual to it; but how these aims were achieved was a secondary matter.

It will be seen that Fascism in this sense is simply an attempt to prevent the realisation of the three conditions we have laid down above for a stable outcome of the current world revolution. It is nationalist, thus contradicting the first condition; it insists on preserving inequality, thereby contradicting the third; and the economic system that results from these is almost bound to be unstable, thus contradicting the second. Fascism is thus

the contemporary form of conservatism, or since we are living in a revolution, the contemporary form of counter-revolution.

It is possible for a country to go fascist in this sense—and it is clearly the important sense, since the frills are likely to follow anyway—without displaying in the early stages the sensational illegalities and cruelties of the European fascists, and even under the auspices of relatively sympathetic leaders and ideas. This must be grasped before it is possible to understand Roy's assertion that in our time all nationalism is potential Fascism, that this is true of Indian nationalism, and that Gandhism is a fascist ideology.

If people will think calmly about Gandhism, they will have to admit that, like the more respectable professions of the European fascists, it is largely a cloak for quite different policies. As a certain Mr. Reid from Madras said at the last conference of the British Conservative Party, the Congress is the Conservative Party of India. It may have to let down its landlord supporters—it is still to be seen on what terms it does so—but it is firmly committed to capitalism, and is reconciled to the States. It is nationalist, of course, and is already working for a fully nationalist economic and political policy—an armaments industry, an active export policy. etc. Yet in plain contradiction to all this it professes Gandhism, and Mahatma Gandhi is still its active leader. It is clear however that his teaching is in its practical effect conservative, though not Conservative: it prevents people from revolting against old-fashioned institutions and against economic and social inequality. It is only recently that he has ceased explicitly to defend landlordism and caste.

Roy was highly critical of Gandhism from the very start, in 1920, and has never altered his opinion. He has of course written much on Gandhism at one time and another, and he has said many penetrating things about it. Yet it is true, I think, that he has failed to make his criticisms intelligible to the Indian reader. His approach to Gandhism seems that of an outsider, an unsympathetic foreigner. He has never tried to get under the skin of the Mahatma or his admirers and see where that extraordinary power comes from.

If I may digress, I once made such an attempt, though with contrary purpose. Reacting against what seemed academic

criticism of Gandhism by the left wing, I tried to find elements in it which could be used for democratic and socialist purposes. Needless to say, I found plenty, though I ended on a pessimistic note, doubting whether Gandhism would not be more easily applied to reactionary ends. Some of the Congress Socialists have discussed a socialist ideology and even strategy deriving from Gandhism. But as Roy always thought likely, the Congress Socialists have turned out to be merely nationalists, and that seems the probable fate of any attempt of this sort to give socialism indigenous roots.

My most serious mistake in regard to Gandhism was, I suppose, to overlook the gulf between its theory and its practice. It is extraordinary, beyond almost any other movement in this respect. More often than not, it achieves the opposite of what it professes. The Mahatma's followers do not take him seriously. They are bored with these lofty principles; they accept them as Christian congregations accept the weekly sermon on loving their neighbour, and go about their business unmoved. And the Mahatma, though in a sense he means most of what he says, is perfectly well aware that it is largely ignored. Of course in our imperfect world this sort of contradiction is not uncommon. It is notorious in the Anglo-Saxon countries. But I think it is even more pronounced here. It is to be attributed, apart from the will to believe and the fear of non-conformity, to a general character of this ancient priestly culture, which attaches exceptional importance to words—semi-magic mantras, scriptures which must not be altered by a syllable, and the like—which allows freedom of belief, or at least of discussion, at the expense of strict conformity in practice, tends to attach higher moral value to intention than to achievement, and has evolved an intensely introverted and other-worldly philosophy. Clearly in such a society reaction will find it exceptionally easy to masquerade as progress. And in such a society a man with Roy's background will find himself very much out of his element. He is accustomed to the atmosphere of continental Europe, where they call a spade a spade and despise Anglo-Saxon cant—and would be astounded by Indian cant if they met it. (I am not passing judgement: cant may very well have its uses too).

Whatever it is in theory then, Gandhism in its practical applications is at nearly every point conservative, an attempt to preserve the old world whose breakdown had set us our problem. It is thus to be ruled out as no solution.

The next solution to consider is communism. This is much nearer the mark than Fascism. Indeed it is in principle a complete solution. It does not require the conquest of the world by a single power, as Fascism does. If the major powers went communist they could and probably would cooperate, and we should have peace. The instability of capitalism would certainly be abolished. And there is no reason to doubt that the standard of life would be steadily raised, especially in the more backward countries. Thus all three of our conditions would be fulfilled.

To the extent that he admits that the communists' aims are right, Roy remains a supporter of the communist solution, and of the Soviet Union, which has shown that the instability of capitalism can be eliminated without economic disaster. What is wrong with this solution is that it has confined itself almost to the theoretical minimum necessary for a stable outcome; it has not gone far enough. The scheme as it has worked out in the Soviet Union has shown most serious defects, centring round the failure to provide individual liberty. It may be that if the communist solution were adopted throughout the world, these defects would be remedied. The problem of peace being solved, the need for militarism would vanish, and a more acceptable regime, providing reasonable liberty and equality, might emerge. Probably many communists expect this. There is however considerable doubt about it. A theory has been elaborated which condemns our idea of liberty as an error and maintains that true freedom is to be found in absorption into the body of society. And the existing illiberal regime in the Soviet Union is maintained by a powerful privileged class which would certainly not give up its dominant position easily.

In any case people judge by results. The fact is that the achievements of the Soviet Union hitherto have not been such as to inspire the rest of the world with a desire to do likewise; in fact they have stirred up a great deal of opposition, so much so that the success of communism on a world scale seems no longer a

practical proposition, except possibly after further prolonged conflict. It is very striking that after the recent war, which was expected to touch off a whole series of communist revolutions, communism has in fact expanded only so far as the Red Army has marched, and it is fairly clear that if the Red Army marches much further it will provoke another world war.

This criticism of the Soviet Union will perhaps arouse some opposition, but it is not new and is unquestionably well founded. We cannot doubt the predominant opinion of the great number of able and in large part favourably inclined observers who have reported from first hand on the Soviet Union. For fifteen years past these observers have been pretty consistently critical. Apart from their testimony we have the public facts of Soviet domestic and foreign policy, which together make a picture which is not attractive enough to win the support of normal cultured people abroad. It is not convincing to attribute this coolness to the influence of vested interests or propaganda. The broad truth cannot be hidden, though as Burnham has remarked there is no way to make anyone see who has decided in advance to keep his eyes shut. We have also the unquestionable fact that the Soviet occupation in Europe has been very unpopular. Manual workers are a different matter, but the middle-class people who become active members of the communist movement abroad are few, and it is reasonable to suspect, are in many cases swayed by subjective, often neurotic impulses, while the movement is now relying less on its basic principles than on nationalism and other emotion-rousing stunts.

Probably the conditions in Russia thirty years ago left the communist leaders no alternative, but it is characteristic of their outlook to attempt by way of change only the minimum which the "objective conditions" made necessary and to overlook what people would be likely to want. Roy makes the interesting remarks that the ultimate root of this mistaken policy is the underestimation of ideas. The underestimation of ideas is in fact explicitly professed in the post-revolutionary communist philosophy, in what is sometimes declared to be its fundamental principle, "the unity of theory and practice, with practice primary". This principle is clearly a very dangerous one. It

amounts to pragmatism, and pragmatism not in its original high-minded form but the caricature into which it was twisted by its critics: the truth is what works, therefore whatever I can make to work will be the truth. That is, might is right. To "unify" theory and practice, with practice coming first, is to justify whatever the government does, and to destroy all independent standards of judgement. It judges ideas by their practical effects, not by their truth, and thus justifies the political control of thought. A state in which the official philosophy avows this as its leading principle is bound to be illiberal. It is the opposite error to the Indian one; which elevates ideas and principles so high above the earth that people give up the attempt to adjust their practical conduct to them. And as sometimes happens, extremes show a tendency to meet.

Thus, though for very different reasons, neither Fascism nor communism provides the solution the world is waiting for. There is a third policy worth discussing, social democracy, constitutional or liberal socialism. This could be a theoretically adequate solution, and would compare favourably with communism in regard to individual freedom. Moreover its success would stir up far less opposition, even from outright capitalist America and it would thus avoid the practical difficulty on this score that faces communism. However, there is no likelihood of social democracy achieving the necessary measure of success. Though it has many adherents and a few powerful parties, whose records of practical work are respectable, it is suited only to countries with a strong parliamentary tradition, and even in these has failed rather strikingly to kindle enthusiasm. It is a fair-weather policy, out of its element in our chaotic era. In its competition with communism it tends on the whole to lose ground. In any case it has had no strength hitherto in India.

Thus we seem in India as in most other countries to be left with only two competitors for our support—nationalism, which against its present will, no doubt, but we believe inexorably, will be driven towards fascism; and communism. It is remarkable how widespread is the opinion that these are the alternatives before us, and to that opinion must be attributed much of the fatalistic pessimism which underlies the nationalist or

communalist exuberance we see about us.

Roy however does not accept that opinion. Here he is not only conducting social analysis, he is judging values, and I may say that I regard his judgement of values as no less sound than his judgement of facts. He says that this dilemma is tolerable. As between the two communism is better, doubtless, but its success is most unlikely and it is not good enough. We have seen communism tried out, we can tell where and how it went wrong, and we ought to be able to avoid its worst errors.

Any ultimate solution of the world's troubles must be socialist or collectivist. That is inescapable. We can therefore build on the traditions of the socialist movement. But that movement in both its divergent branches has reached a dead end. A policy adequate to meet the world's needs must avoid the errors of both the traditional socialist parties. It must get away from the lifeless, uninspiring formalism of the social democrats; and the direction in which it can look for remedies is to bring the rank-and-file voter into intimate, permanent contact with the administration, more or less in the way the original Soviets did in Russia. How this may be done is suggested in Roy's *Draft Constitution for India*, which should be read together with this book. On the other hand, though it accepts the Soviet it rejects the illiberal doctrines and practices which have caused the communists to be so strongly opposed—their reliance only on the industrial working class and the poorer peasants, and hostility to other classes, their intolerance of all ideas but their own, their repudiation of free elections and of civil liberties, and their demand for a single party dictatorship. The conditions which made this narrow policy plausible thirty years ago have been destroyed by subsequent events, and over large parts of the world a really liberal but dynamic socialism can now appeal confidently to all classes except the few remaining rich. There are indications that the communists are changing their policy in this direction, but how genuine the change is remains to be seen, and even if it is genuine they will have to overcome an immense amount of doubt as to their good faith before they can make it effective.

To sum it up in slogan form, Roy says that to the three

objectively necessary factors in a solution set forth above, we must add a fourth, freedom. (1) Peace; (2) Collectivism; (3) Material well-being; (4) Freedom. His *Draft Constitution* again suggests the kind of state structure in which these ideals can be realised. All four points could be discussed with advantage. Here I propose to make some remarks only about two of them.

Peace obviously involves some limitation upon nationalism, but how far and in what ways nationalism must be curbed is a big question. The Radical Democratic Party has incurred much defamation by ranging itself against nationalism—not in the sense of opposing the demand for national independence, but of opposing nationalism as an ideology. In this it is following the tradition of the Marxian, and indeed the pre-Marxian, socialist movement.

This socialist anti-nationalism has of late been subjected to much criticism. It is said that socialists cannot be expected to sacrifice national interests, or refuse to defend their country, or to draw inspiration from its culture; and that if they attempt to do these things they isolate themselves, not only politically but psychologically, and find themselves like a branch cut from the tree, dried up and useless. In practice the social democrats have since 1914 been nationalists, if usually of an apologetic, undemonstrative type. The communists at first denounced them as traitors for this, but latterly have gone one better and almost everywhere have become vehemently nationalistic. This has been justified by pointing out that the bourgeoisie, at one time the leaders of nationalism, showed during the Nazi-Fascist episode that they preferred the solidarity of class and wealth to that of the nation, and that it has, therefore, fallen to the masses to maintain national traditions. The communists, no doubt, seeing in this an easy way to popularity, have taken their cue eagerly, and have so to speak commandeered the national cultures.

All this however is not a complete answer to the socialist case against nationalism. It is possible in some circumstances to make use of nationalism for good ends, but it remains a dangerous tool, and even in proletarian hands will require to be used with discrimination. Technical, economic and political

conditions demand world unification, and accordingly the nation as a political unit is obsolete and nationalism is reactionary. Nationalism becomes the emotional core round which gathers the ideology of the past, which a progressive movement must aim to change more or less considerably. There is a distinction between the content of a national culture and its national form. So far as that content is valuable, it is likely to be universal rather than national. When a man is thinking, or investigating, or criticising, or delineating, or expounding, he is unlikely to produce the best work unless he feels that he is pursuing the truth, and in fact most of the best culture is imbued with this universal spirit.

It does not follow that one who believes this need cut himself off psychologically from his nation or refuse to defend it or to participate in its culture, any more than he need cut himself off from his family. His efforts ought to be directed towards harmonising national interests and culture and world interest and culture.

The politics of the matter does not however solve the psychological problem, which for many people remains a serious one. Roy discusses it in one aspect in the speech "Two Psychoses" in this volume. That deals with a special case, but it seems to be generally true that the adoption of what are believed to be rational political opinions which run counter to the general opinion is apt to lead to prickings of conscience and apathy. The only practical remedy is reason. One must explore the rational foundations of one's beliefs and be sure that they are worthy of one's acceptance. It is particularly necessary to beware of irresponsible theoretical criticisms and extravagant hostility to common opinion. Such attitudes are often a cover for other motives, and once this attitude is punctured, one is left deflated and apathetic. But with the best possible case it takes strength to stand alone.

It is necessary on the other hand not to be defeatist about nationalism: We hear a great deal of its power as an emotion and a political force, but this may be exaggerated. It is primarily a defensive attitude. Those who make use of it in the absence of genuine dangers have to work it up with much labour, and fabricate grievances for the purpose. Even when

there are genuine dangers and grievances, it is not clear that nationalism is always the emotional centre of the response to them. In the European Resistance to the Nazis, sheer nationalism seems to have been but one factor of several. It was less national hostility to the Germans as such which destroyed their plan of European unification than resentment at their predatory policy and horror at their cruelty. In the same way in India the national movement is not a purely nationalist movement. It has always been concerned with other grievances, and in fact nationalism is to some extent fictitious, created to obscure those grievances. In considerable sections of the people it has even now failed to do so. We need not fear that we are losing an indispensable weapon by refusing to cash in on nationalism.

Internationalism is in the tradition of the socialist movement, but freedom, the fourth condition as I have put it, which Roy proposes should be made a fundamental guide and criterion of our politics, is in a more doubtful position. As Max Eastman has pointed out, the socialist movement is animated by contradictory impulses. In some of its adherents the urge to freedom predominates; but in others it is a revolt against the atomisation of bourgeois society, a desire for comradeship, fraternity; while in still others it is a revolt against the chaos and waste and inefficiency of capitalism, a demand for organisation. Whatever the rank and file have felt, in socialism as a political trend these latter collectivistic and totalitarian impulses have predominated. In Marx the urge to freedom was strong, but he rather took it for granted as an ideal and thought little about it, and he helped greatly to discredit it by identifying bourgeois freedom with free trade. The Fabians, having been brought up in bourgeois freedom, rather reacted against it, and certainly helped to discredit it. J.B. Priestley and George Orwell have both recently drawn attention to the adulation of dictators to be found throughout Bernard Shaw's work. Though less consistently, H.G. Wells also was guilty of encouraging dictatorial ideas. The social democrats however have usually favoured freedom, if in their usual lukewarm way. It is the communists who have been the most consistent and ardent opponents of freedom, not indeed as an ultimate ideal, but here and now, in theory and in practice. For if they have used the

word freedom to describe the condition of a loyal participant in the communist enterprise, they have criticised and deprecated the liberal type of freedom, and have concentrated their efforts on achieving the other two ideals, fraternity and organisation. And in this they have been moving with the times. For industrialisation and the more highly integrated society it brings inevitably increase the regimentation to which the individual is subjected; and the socialist form of industrialism, by largely destroying private property, the basis of freedom hitherto, carries the process much further still.

Is it then of any use to kick against the pricks? In an industrialised, and more especially in a socialised society, is not the eclipse of liberty inevitable?

Not if we really want liberty and organise for it and are willing to pay for it. We cannot ensure it of course by abstract declarations. It will require careful working out and patient education. But that is true of almost any good which is to be enjoyed by a modern society. The constitution, the rights it guarantees, the legal system, can all be so ordered as to help freedom and hamper tyranny. The right, for example, to a minimum living wage whether one works or idles, would go far to deprive the state of its power to coerce the individual. It would be expensive, but to a libertarian it would be worth it. Similarly genuine freedom of association could largely replace private property as the basis of effective freedom for unorthodox and sectional opinions and their expression. There is no absolute need for a socialised society to monopolise the press, broadcasting, the cinema and education. If we really want liberty we can so arrange that within quite wide limits minorities and even cliques and cranks have effective access to these means of expressing themselves. Indeed we must so arrange, for that what freedom means.

It has always been the socialist view that in spite of superficial appearances industrialism makes for freedom as well as against it. A small illustration comes from Nazi Germany, where least of all places did they deliberately plan for freedom. There they inaugurated something approaching the freedom to travel. Of course they did not make it free, but they sent many poor people, who otherwise might never have left their

home town, to see the Norwegian fiords and the sun above the horizon at midnight. Subsidised travel all over the world, organised to be genuinely free, would be a valuable freedom.

This is all very well, but is freedom really practical politics? Nobody proposes to dispense with the criminal law, nor with a constitution, or political and economic leadership, or other inducements to cooperative behaviour. The trouble in India is likely to be less any exuberant kicking over the traces than a timid clinging to old ways and a refusal to exercise the creative ability that people possess though they so often do not know it. For the people of India are well prepared for liberty in this sense, that their chains are very largely internal, forged by themselves, and they are accustomed to a considerable degree of external theoretical liberty. A people restrained by external force will fall into anarchy when that force is relaxed. A people restrained by their own inhibitions will grow into freedom without many excesses. The problem of India is to induce people to be free, to overcome their fear of it. This can be done by combining with freedom as high a degree of material security as possible, by breaking down cultural isolation, which ties people to their roots, and by providing opportunity.

It is a big experiment, an act of faith in human nature, but what we know of human nature is not discouraging, and it is doubtful if there is any other way. One of the greatest authorities on human nature, Freud, said in a discussion of Soviet Russia, "People who are going to produce liberty some time in the future are just the same for me as people who are going to have it ready for you in the celestial paradise." If we really want freedom we must go for it now.

One more doubt. Granted that we can be free if we want to, do we want to? Is it not a rather too aristocratic ideal? Is freedom as a political objective popular enough to provide the urge to a mass movement so strong as to dissipate the deadlock between capitalist nationalism and Communism?

Freedom is loved best by those who are most completely deprived of it. The nineteenth-century Europeans fleeing from their quasi-serfdom or their ghettos to the New World, or the twentieth century Europeans under the Nazi conquest, these knew the meaning of tyranny and developed a passionate urge

to freedom. We have not been deprived of freedom to quite that extent, but we have experienced external compulsion enough to make freedom the most popular national objective.

The demand for freedom, if not of the fiercest intensity, is very widespread. Every party subscribes to it. The restrictions upon freedom in Russia have caused a strong reaction against communism. It can almost be said that the popular cry of the moment is libertarian socialism. The Gandhists base their objection to both capitalism and socialism mainly upon the supposed tendency of both to destroy freedom, and correspondingly put forward its ability to safeguard freedom as a principal claim in support of their village plan. Various other religious groups are demanding recognition as the third way between capitalism and communism on the strength of their adhesion to freedom.

The sentiment in favour of freedom exists. It will be strengthened as experience reveals that despite the good intentions of the planners planned capitalism does not yield freedom but the opposite, and that in the sphere of public policy allotted to it Gandhism is coercive and restrictive through and through.

However, as I have said, our chains are for the most part of our own forging, and that will still be true in the utopia our Gandhists and national capitalists are planning between them. But as the ideas which enchain our minds become more plainly unsuited to our situation, the process by which they are imposed on us will be more clearly felt as coercion. Freedom implies the right to err, but when the great majority hold ideas which impel them to profitless and disastrous quarrels, and lead them to prefer ruinous to useful economic policies, they will begin to feel that they are not effectively free. This is the unfreedom from which India is suffering now, and surely it is painful enough to inspire strong demand and struggle to be free, if we can show people how they are enslaved.

Freedom is not only an objective, it is a method. This is implied in Freud's remark. If we want to achieve freedom we must work for it in a free way. There will then be room for all—those with definite political ideas, and those with but vague aspirations, those with religious beliefs and those without

—for the aim of freedom is the guarantee that none will find himself deprived of the fruits of victory. There is only one for whom there is no room: the totalitarian, open or disguised, and the method of freedom is such that as we go along he will expose himself.

Finally, I may revert to Max Eastman. He distinguished three impulses behind the socialist movement—for freedom, for fraternity and for order. Roy points out a fourth which is conspicuously present in all the socialist movements and thinkers—the moral motive, the demand for a better order. It is sometimes expressed as demand for equality, but it is broader than that. It shows itself in the protests of Wells against the patent medicine racket, of Morel against the Congo scandal, best of all perhaps in the work of Upton Sinclair. People want socialism because they see that moral corruption is an essential part of capitalism, the system cannot work without lying, cheating, profiteering, cruelty and unfairness, and they hope that socialism will get rid of these things. It is a moral motive, independent of the other motives, and is a strong one. It may be regarded indeed as the fundamental motive of the socialist movement. And one of the things which it demands is freedom. If it finds that socialism has to be enforced by a police terror, it will conclude that socialism is a mistake. The fundamental inspiration of progressive humanity is behind the demand for freedom.

Bangalore

P. SPRATT

SCIENTIFIC POLITICS

On the outbreak of the second world war, the political life of our country was plunged into a crisis which has not yet been overcome. It was a crisis pregnant with incalculable possibilities, either for good or for evil. All of a sudden, India found herself almost within the reach of freedom. But very few saw the opportunity, because not many in this country felt the urge for freedom. National independence was the fashionable ideal, which did not necessarily mean freedom. Therefore, the revolutionary implications of the war escaped even most of those Indians who called themselves revolutionaries and sincerely believed themselves to be so. The most applauded virtue of sincerity, not fortified by intelligence turned out to be meaningless. It was sufficiently discriminating to enable professed revolutionaries to choose the right side in a critical moment. There were not many in this country to welcome freedom when it was within reach, because so very few were consciously pursuing a really liberating ideal, actuated by emancipating ideas.

Because of that anomaly of her political life, India was more likely to choose the wrong side in the crisis. Therefore the crisis which presented her with the unexpected opportunity of gaining freedom, was also pregnant with great possibilities for evil. Choosing the wrong side, because of the absence of the urge for freedom, in a sufficiently large number of people, India was bound to place herself on the road to slavery, though holding high the misleading flag of national independence.

There were a few in the country who saw the danger. They also realised that thanks to a fortuitous combination of

circumstances, India was presented with a golden opportunity of gaining not only national independence, but something much greater, namely, the freedom for the masses of her people to take destiny in their own hands and shape it intelligently so as to put an end once for all to economic exploitation, social slavery, cultural backwardness and spiritual degradation. Such an opportunity does not come often; it should not be missed. But if it was to be seized, a sufficiently large number of people must see the opportunity and that was conditional upon their grasping the revolutionary implications of the war.

Those who perceived the unexpected opportunity, therefore set to themselves the task of explaining the historical significance of the armed conflict, and convincing political India that she would gain incalculably if she would get over nationalist prejudice fed upon race hatred. That was a thankless task. Its accomplishment was conditional upon at least the "left wing" of the nationalist movement looking beyond the immediate goal of political independence, and visualising the ideal of people's freedom and feeling the impulse to fight for it. That was a cause worth fighting for. Therefore, it was legitimate to hope that the conditions for enabling India to seize the golden opportunity could be created.

To seize the opportunity, India ought to practise scientific politics, not only inspired by a liberating revolutionary ideal, but based upon a realistic analysis of the national and international situation, guided by realism. Revolutionary fervour ought to be combined with the sobering counsel of reason. Historic significance of events ought to be judged not by the good or bad motive of men at the helm of affairs, but by their objective possibilities. The fundamental principles of scientific politics had to be formulated before they could be tested in practice. That was done in a political Study Camp held at Dehradun six years ago.

A small minority in the nationalist movement had visualised the greater ideal of people's freedom years before the revolutionary war opened up the possibility of attaining it much sooner than the boldest of dreamers dared expect. Having developed an ideology of their own, very different from the ambiguous ideals of orthodox nationalism, they had undertaken

the historic task of building up a people's party as the instrument for the struggle for people's freedom. Disagreeing with the Gandhist cult, they nevertheless remained inside the Congress with the hope of transforming it into a revolutionary party of the people. The credit of grasping the revolutionary possibilities of the war as soon as it broke out belongs to them.

The experience of working inside the Congress had convinced them that it was bound to become the party of the upper classes, such as could not possibly serve the purpose of conquering freedom for the people, although it might sway them by demagoguery and emotional appeals. The pioneers of the people's party, therefore, felt the necessity of organising themselves into a distinct group inside the Congress. The mark of their distinction was categorical rejection of Gandhism as a reactionary cult, and a rational scientific approach to all the problems confronting the Indian people. The group was called the League of Radical Congressmen. It was organised formally at the time of the Congress Session at Tripuri, where the dictatorial tendency of the Gandhist leadership made itself felt with all its brazenness and brutality.

Immediately, upon the outbreak of the war, the Executive Committee of the League of Radical Congressmen met to consider the critical situation. Having realistically analysed the relation of forces, nationally and internationally, it outlined the policy to be pursued by India in the crisis precipitated by the war. To-day after the vicissitudes of six fateful years, any objective historian must say that, had the Congress leadership taken the advice of the Radicals, India by now would have been the master of her destiny, instead of being in the present perilous position. The Congress leaders having preferred opportunism when a far-sighted decisive policy was urgently called for, the Radicals had to act independently. It was a moment of fateful decision; the choice was between freedom and Fascism. It had to be made, and made resolutely.

To make the momentous decision, with the conviction to act accordingly, was not easy for the Radicals themselves. They had the tradition of a clearly defined revolutionary ideology. But they were not altogether free from preconceived ideas

about friends and foes. They shared the obsession that the essentially racial doctrine of anti-imperialism was the highest revolutionary virtue. Given that obsession, they were also liable to underrate the danger of Fascism, and consequently land in the wrong camp in the midst of the international civil war. In brief, the Radicals themselves needed a good deal of heart searching before they could take up their place in the Indian political scene as the champions of people's freedom, and as such avowed enemies of Fascism, in the battle to be fought eventually on the home front.

A political Study Camp was held in Dehradun at the end of May 1940 with the object of clarifying revolutionary ideas and ideals. The discussion lasting for ten days covered the entire field of revolutionary theory and practice. Preconceived notions were subjected to a searching criticism. Venerable beliefs were thrown in the crucible of ruthless realism. Fond hopes were put to the test of logical possibility. A clear distinction was made between what should be, and what could be. The fundamental principles of scientific politics crystallised out of that discussion, in course of which passion was tempered by reason, emotion sobered by intelligence, and prejudice dispelled by objective appreciation of facts.

The Dehradun Camp of 1940 gave the small band of Radicals the courage to swim against the current. The courage resulted from the conviction that politics must be rational and scientific if it was to produce positive beneficial results. The fundamental principles of scientific politics were subsequently elaborated in the programme of the Radical Democratic Party, which was inaugurated at the end of 1940.

Since it was founded under the abnormal circumstances outlined above, the Radical Democratic Party has become a force in the public life of the country. Nevertheless, the country as a whole could not seize the golden opportunity presented by the war. As a matter of fact, it moved not towards freedom, but towards Fascism. The R.D.P. alone endeavoured to prevent the dangerous development, which it foresaw. Why did it fail? Why could not a sufficiently powerful mass movement be organised to resist the growth of Fascism? There is no doubt that the R.D.P. programme, as elaborated in the Draft Consti-

tution of Free India, and the People's Plan of Economic Development, presents a vivid picture of freedom needed by the vast bulk of the people. The party has had very little time to carry on propaganda and other forms of activity necessary for mobilising the masses. It was handicapped by the lack of material means. A people's party is a poor man's party. Nevertheless, the oppressed and exploited masses were attracted by the Radical programme. Operating in the face of great difficulties, the party grew itself numerically as no other party has ever grown. Yet, the rising tide of Fascism could not be stemmed. A tidal wave of totalitarian nationalism swept the country in the recent elections. Irreparably weakened by the revolutionary war, Imperialism is eager to instal its erstwhile enemies in power. The ominous change-over is taking place through the intermediary of the Labour Government, which was expected to extend a helping hand to Indian Democracy. It seems that lured by a false perspective, the Radicals disregarded the realities of the Indian situation and wasted time and energy in futile efforts. Is that the lesson of six years experience? If that is so, then, we must come to the conclusion that either politics cannot be scientific, or scientific politics cannot be practised.

Exactly after six years, the Central Political Council of the R.D.P. is again meeting in a political Camp at Dehradun. In addition to the 66 members of the Council, about 150 other leading members of the party, including all the candidates who contested provincial election, are attending the Camp. All the above questions will be freely raised and frankly discussed. That is a feature of scientific politics. Nothing is taken for granted. It knows no dogmas. It is not guided by revealed wisdom or anybody's inner voice. Experience is the touch-stone of all theories and principles. At the same time, facts are not taken at their face value. To explain phenomena is the function of science. Experienced facts must be subjected to a critical examination, and then conclusion drawn from them.

I should not anticipate the discussion in the Camp. Indeed, I should not even raise questions and suggest answers. But I thought that it might be helpful if all possible reactions to experience were surmised and depicted in broad outlines. That might serve as incentive to thought, and thus make the discussions

in the Camp more fruitful. But I do not intend to state my personal reaction. That might influence the thought of others. Free thinking, unfettered judgment, and a tolerant but critical regard for others' opinions are essential for a fruitful discussion.

All the questions that might conceivably arise from the march of events during the last six years, as well as from our own experience, are formulated in the agenda of the Camp. They allow free ventilation of all manner of views—optimistic, pessimistic, sceptic. To a large extent, the views will be coloured by the temperament of those expressing them. That subjective factor must be taken into consideration while appraising the views. Emotion plays a big part in human behaviour but scientific politics seeks to control emotion by reason.

Whatever may be the result of the discussions, and I personally have no doubt about it, the Camp will be a landmark not only in the history of the R.D.P., but in the political annals of India. The Camp held six years ago laid the foundation of the R.D.P., which chose a burning torch as the symbol of its politics and emblem of ideal. The R.D.P. stands for Enlightenment. It advocates a philosophical revolution to provide moral and spiritual incentive to great social upheavals which will set the Indian people free. Until and unless the urge for freedom is kindled in a sufficiently large number of people, even great mass movements can be misled. That has been the case in India. Cultural backwardness of the masses has lent itself to their emotional regimentation. The result is that the rise of Fascism has been glorified as the struggle for freedom.

Enlightenment, rationalism, alone can take the Indian people out of this vicious circle. But it will not do if it remains an academic virtue. It must become the guiding principle of politics. That is why scientific politics alone can lead India to freedom. It may appear to be a long process. But there is no other way, and once the initial steps are taken, the new trail is blazed, things will move faster.

While armed with this conviction, we shall, however, not be inclined to play the ostrich. Realities must be faced, whether they are heartening or terrifying. Inaugurating the first Dehradun Camp, I said: "By facing difficulties and overcoming them, one

becomes a revolutionary", or something like that. I still stand by that view, and suggest that the altered situation of six years later should be met accordingly.

We met in the Dehradun Camp six years ago to ascertain the duty of revolutionaries, fighting for people's freedom from spiritual as well as social slavery, while triumphant international Fascism cast its ominous shadow athwart the civilised world. We resolved to stand by democracy which, at that juncture, appeared to be a lost cause, risking our political reputation and putting our political future at stake. We failed to carry the country with us on the road to freedom, even when it lay open before it. But we stood by our intelligently chosen ideal with the courage of conviction. We swam against the current successfully. I am decidedly of the opinion that it was a rich experience, which has only steeled us for the coming struggle.

We are meeting in this Camp six years later to decide how to meet the new situation. Fascism has been defeated in the battle-fields of Europe and Asia. But international civil war between progress and reaction, revolution and counter-revolution, is still waged on the home fronts which cut across nations. In this new situation, we shall have to fight Fascism on our home front. This is not an unexpected situation. The Radicals were the first to sound the alarm against the menace of Fascism. Many others also called themselves revolutionaries, and let us not doubt their sincerity, preferred to live in a world of make-believe. They declared, like the soon-to-be disillusioned American Liberals "it cannot happen here". I wonder if they have learned the lesson even now. But we are not taken unawares. We are ready. It will be a hard fight. We have already tasted it. Fascism is almost in the saddle. Backed up by decayed Imperialism desperately trying to escape the doom of history, it will be a formidable enemy of freedom. It will have the great asset of the emotionally regimented masses. Philosophical revolution and scientific politics are the only weapon which can blast that foundation of Indian Fascism. They are in the armoury of the R.D.P. Therefore, I say that we are prepared for the new situation.

What shall be done concretely, and how to go about it, will be decided in the Camp. Our belief in scientific politics is put

to test. Having survived the ordeal of vilification by a press controlled by vested interests, the R.D.P. will stand the new test even more successfully. Only, let us have no illusion. Let us be fully alive to the danger and be prepared for everything which is known to be the reward of the crusaders for people's freedom.

A NEW IDEOLOGY

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

By way of opening the Camp, there is really very little to say. A whole series of problems will have to be discussed. For that purpose, this Camp has been convened. It would not be proper for me to anticipate the discussions. Because, we have assembled here to find out which questions may be agitating the mind of the party. You will have to raise the questions, and you shall have to find the answers. We, the conveners of the Camp, shall do nothing more than participate in the discussions, and try to help you with our experience.

Nevertheless, we do not want to have an erratic discussion. Although the Camp will remain in session for ten days, yet there will not be enough time to discuss everything under the sun, without limit and at random. There has to be some direction, some organisation in our procedure. With that in view, the Central Secretariat has prepared not only the agenda of the Camp, but also a synopsis for each item on the agenda. First the questions on the agenda should be discussed. But that does not preclude the raising of other questions, bearing in mind that, unless we limit our discussion, it cannot bear any fruit. In the beginning, we shall discuss the problems only with the purpose of clarifying our minds; yet, ultimately, something concrete will have to come out of the deliberations. We are not meeting in an academic spirit, simply to discuss any kind of questions. In order to find the solution of any particular problem, the problem will have to be clearly stated and since all problems are inter-related, no problem can be properly discussed unless it is relatively isolated. Attempt should therefore be made

to circumscribe the radius of the discussions, so that the discussion of every single problem will lead to some conclusion, and ultimately, on the basis of those conclusions, we can shape the future of the party.

With reference to the method we want to follow in this Camp, I may make a few observations regarding our party and the principles which are to guide its activities. Exactly six years ago, to be precise, on the 20th of May 1940, we held a Camp also in Dehradun. The results of the deliberations of that first Dehradun Camp were published in the form of a book called "Scientific Politics". I believe that book came to be regarded as the guide for all our activities. But we do not believe in revealed wisdom. We do not believe that the whole truth is revealed to anybody at any given time. Experience is the only source of truth which is revealed to man progressively. What is believed to be truth on the sanction of certain experiences, may not cease to be true, but may no longer be the dependable guide for our activities after some time. From time to time, we must test the truth, which has guided us previously. It must be thrown in the crucible of experience gained subsequently. On the basis of that experience, our knowledge must be broadened, our minds clarified and a greater truth discovered.

The first Dehradun Camp met in a very critical period, not only in the history of our party, but it was one of the most critical periods of the history of the whole world. The historical significance of the first Dehradun Camp was that the very few people in our country who realised the magnitude of the crisis assembled there. Perhaps all of them did not have that consciousness from the very beginning, but the realisation dawned on most of them in course of the Camp. If the first Dehradun Camp had not resulted in the foundation of our party, the fact alone that a handful of people realised the magnitude of the crisis which overtook our country stands to the credit of those who assembled there. All of them have not politically survived the intervening six years. Not many of them are here. But I remember every one of their faces, which at that time bore expressions of doubt, incredulity and even indignation. It was a rather excruciating intellectual and emotional experience for all of us. It will not in any way belittle the significance of that Camp or dishonour

the memory of those who assembled there, if I recollect that not many of them dispersed fully in the spirit with which the critical situation was to have been met.

The discussion in that Camp practically covered the entire field of political theories and practice. Cherished ideals, convictions and faiths were subjected to a critical examination. Having appraised the usefulness of certain political practices, until then believed to be revolutionary activity, we came to the conclusion that they were futile and might under circumstances be even harmful.

The principles of political theories and practice as well as the ideals of revolution, which emerged from the discussions of the first Dehradun Camp were generically called by us scientific politics. The term scientific politics was not new. It is generally admitted that, being a branch of social science, politics is also a science. Political theories are considered to be scientific theories.

Nevertheless, political practice is very largely a matter of emotion, and that is particularly so in our country. Political theories are also very largely determined by emotion, by our wishes, by our desires. In any case, we should admit in the very beginning that political practice is really a matter of emotion. Politics as a branch of social science is a science, but at the same time, political science is practised by human beings. Human beings can be the object of scientific examination in more than one way. Yet, the basic urge of all human activity is emotional. Therefore, it is quite correct to say that political practice is very largely emotional, and it is very difficult to practise politics scientifically.

I may digress for a minute to illustrate what I mean. One guiding principle of all scientific investigation is that no proposition should be given the credit of being scientific unless it can be stated in mathematical terms. Now, many propositions of social science, many propositions even of politics, can be stated approximately in that manner. But where emotions are concerned, science must be modest and should not claim a very high degree of probability for its propositions. Emotion is one of the forms of biological activities which cannot yet be measured mathematically. Therefore, it is so very difficult to lay down very rigid laws of political practice. But, on the other hand,

unless we have some guide, practice will be groping in the dark; it may even be like madmen running amock. And as a matter of fact, politics has degenerated to such a state, not only in India, but in other parts of the world also. Therefore, in order to practise politics with a minimum measure of guarantee of its leading to positive results, it is necessary to have some guiding principles which may claim the validity of scientific propositions.

In the first Dehradun Camp, we tried to arrive at some such principles. We had a long discussion on the relation of classes in Indian Society. By examining things as they are in India, we came to the conclusion that our previous notions of class relations, acquired from text books written on the basis of experience in other countries, did not quite fit in with the realities in our country. Now, politics is a form of human activity; having for its object the administration of public affairs so as to guarantee the greatest good to the greatest number. Therefore, the interrelation of the various groups constituting a particular community necessarily determines the form of political practice. When we discovered that the relation of classes in our country was very much different from the relation of classes in other countries, and when we further discovered that the relation of classes in our country did not fit in with that pattern which was the basis of certain political practices, until then believed by us to be revolutionary, not only had we to formulate new principles of political theory; we also adjusted our political activity to those theories.

I made these few retrospective remarks with the object of reminding you of the spirit with which our party was born. The birth of our party marked a break with tradition, not only of the reactionary nationalist politics; it marked also a break with the tradition of what we had until then believed to be revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice.

Perhaps, at the time, the fundamental feature of the very being and becoming of the Radical Democratic Party was not clear to many of us. Indeed, in course of time, I began to realise that the principles that resulted from our discussions in the first Dehadun Camp, had a much more far-reaching significance than I could myself imagine in those days. That is not surprising. At their inception, the implications of new ideas are not

evident. The dynamics of ideas unfolds itself in course of experience.

We propose to conduct this Camp also in the spirit of the first Dehradun Camp, that is, in the spirit of an objective seeker after truth. We have assembled not simply to review what we have done in the past, to approve or disapprove of having done this or that thing, to find our weaknesses and to resolve to be good in future. All that, of course, will be done in due time. But firstly we have to forget that we have any vested interest, so to say; that our purpose is to criticise or approve the politics of a party. We have assembled with a greater purpose; it is to discuss certain problems which have been raised not by the experience of our party alone, but by the experience of the world as a whole. We must approach those problems as scientists; they are related with the anatomy and physiology of entire modern human society. Having come to certain conclusions from that purely scientific analysis, we shall then review the experience of our party to judge if we have been doing the right thing. On the basis of this new insight into the anatomy and physiology of modern civilised society, we shall also have to judge how we should act in the future.

I have come to this Camp prepared for the hypothetically possible conclusion, which may result from our experience, that a party like the Radical Democratic Party has no place in this country. This very cross statement should put you in the right mood. At the same time, let me also tell you, so that you might not get on the wrong track, that whatever is once stated, having been subjected to all kinds of examination, and having been established as scientific truth, can never be wrong. Our political theories and practice must be judged from that point of view. They may be inadequate; they may have to be enlarged, amended; but they must have set us on the right road. But we should not begin with the spirit of a believer, as people with vested interests, determined to justify whatever has happened. We should begin with the spirit of scepticism, the spirit of seekers after truth, and we must have some standard for what is truth.

We are meeting here at a time which, in a way, may be even more critical than when we met six years ago. Because the problems which appeared very dimly before our minds at that

time, have become very pressing and more articulate. Therefore, to-day it is no longer enough for us only to visualise distant possibilities. The possibilities have become realities. We are face to face with them and it has become a question of either swimming or sinking, either we live or we die. Nor is it the question whether the Radical Democratic Party lives or dies, but whether civilised humanity lives or dies, whether India will be a part of modern humanity forging ahead, or will join the victorious army of irrationalism marching triumphantly back to mediaeval darkness. It does appear to all who are not blessed with blind faith that the whole world is moving that way.

During these short years of our existence as a party, we frequently talked of the danger of Fascism. The spectre which haunted civilised humanity for all these years has been laid, militarily. But, as far as our country is concerned, the danger is greater than ever before. That will be a topic of our discussions. I should not anticipate it. But in passing I must make a reference to a thing or two. I do not know whether many of us really understood what is meant by Fascism, when we spoke so much about it. In any case, at that time, Fascism, whatever it might be, was something distant. We saw the danger was coming nearer to our country, and the prevailing political movement of the country was indifferent to it. And, we suspected, it might even welcome the danger. Therefore we sounded the alarm, and thought it was our duty as revolutionaries to try to organise some sort of resistance to that danger.

To-day the danger, in so far as it was a danger not inside but outside our country, is apparently dead. Fascism has been defeated in the battle-fields. Politically also in many countries it has been very largely weakened. Yet, an examination of the world situation, an unbiased appreciation of events, and a realistic view of the perspective of developments, which is opening up before us from day to day, do not allow us to be very optimistic. That will be clear to us when we come to the particular point on the agenda. However, the situation outside our country is not altogether unmitigated. The struggle between progress and reaction, between good and evil, if I may use this old-fashioned term, is still going on, and the chances may be appraised as fifty-fifty. That is a hopeful position for the con-

temporary world. If revolutionary crises, which we have been taught, make revolutions inevitable, the chances are usually fifty-fifty. Any revolutionary crisis is also a counter-revolutionary crisis. The counter-revolution is as likely to triumph as the revolution. In the modern world, the forces of counter-revolution are incomparably stronger than the forces of revolution. That is a lesson of experience, which should compel every revolutionary not only to be sceptical about his theoretical presuppositions and postulates; if he is bold enough and is a man with scientific spirit, he will be persuaded even to reject some of his cherished ideals.

Turning to our country, we find the situation to be much darker; the chances are not even fifty-fifty. There is very little to be cheerful about. The only consolation is that we have not been taken unawares. We saw what was coming. We warned the country. We tried to stop it. Still, it could not be stopped. To-day we alone can say, well, this country does not deserve anything better. But, on the other hand, with our traditions, with our experience, with our commitments, we cannot retrace our steps. We shall have to go ahead. But we should go ahead with no illusions. Indeed, if we want to go ahead, we must have a new ideological equipment, a new philosophical vision, a new faith, so to say. In my opinion, this Camp will serve no purpose unless it will give not only to the Radical Democratic Party, not only to India, but to the tormented world, a new faith for civilised humanity. That is what humanity needs to-day. I do not know if light ever came from the East. On the strength of the legend that light comes from the Orient, they talk of India's civilising mission. History gives no evidence that light ever really came from the East. History only records hordes of Huns and other barbarians coming from that direction to overrun the world. On that historical evidence, it would be more truthful to say that the forces of darkness came from the East. At last, perhaps once in history, light may really come from the East.

Do you realise why we selected the torch as the symbol of our party? Civilised humanity is groping in the dark. A new trail must be blazed for it. The world needs a new light, a new philosophy. Therefore we selected the torch as our emblem.

Guided by the principles formulated six years ago, we have

gained experience. But having made the self-same experience, all of us yet may not draw the same lessons, and everyone of us may be equally correct. A feature of scientific politics is not to take any fact on its face value; no experience should be taken on its face value either. Therefore, you should not be guided by the lesson I have drawn from experience which you may have shared. I react in one way; but you may react to the same experience differently. So, let us compare notes; let us set aside facts, which in reality may be fictions, and discover a common denominator of our common experience, and draw conclusions from that.

As I said already in the beginning, our politics is not the result of revealed wisdom. We know no dogma. We know no authority. None of us claims to have an inner voice. But on the other hand, let us not be guided by illusions and call them facts. For instance, when a man sees a ghost, he really sees a ghost. He makes an experience. He does not lie. His experience is a fact. Because you know that there is no ghost, do not call that man a liar. Only say that his mentality or his ability to experience is influenced by certain preconceived notions, and therefore he sees a thing that does not really exist or imagines it to be different from what it really is.

That may have been the case with our experience. Many things have happened. I have judged them from the point of view of my temperament, my preconceived notions, my way of looking at things. The same happens to others; they see things from their point of view, their judgment is influenced by their temperament and preconceived notions. So, when we examine our experiences, we shall have to set aside our "I's", and place the facts of our experience in the context of the general setting of our country and of the world, which cannot be experienced as a whole by anyone of us. Before we come to the conclusion that our country is moving in a certain direction in consequence of certain happenings, we should ascertain if our experience is not an illusion. We must ask if such happenings are possible in the given circumstances of our country. Let me illustrate what I mean. You may see water. But if it can be established that neither hydrogen nor oxygen has been present in that particular place, you should not believe your vision. In the absence of

hydrogen and oxygen there can have been no water. Similarly, every political fact is the result of a certain combination of circumstances. Similar combinations of circumstances will produce similar results everywhere. If we see that in our country facts are taking place, as they did, for instance, in Russia during the October Revolution, or somewhere else, we shall have to ask whether the social background for the happening of such facts is there or not. If we find that the appropriate social background is absent in our country, then we must doubt our own judgment and admit that we have been dreaming, that we have been creating an ideal world out of imagination. But usually that is not done. Wishful thinking, therefore becomes a revolutionary virtue. To avoid disappointment and frustration, desirable developments are imagined. To see ghosts becomes the evidence of revolutionary fervour. That way can only lead to the madhouse. If we do not want that fate to overtake us, we shall have to submit the facts of our experience to the test of historical possibility, and place before us a perspective of things which can possibly happen in our country. *conclusion*

We are living in a given atmosphere. We are not detached on-lookers. The atmosphere affects us. If you stand on the roadside and watch an I.N.A. demonstration, subconsciously your feet move as if marking time. So, you see how, dormant in every revolutionary, lies the counter-revolutionary. The atmosphere in which we live is clouding our judgment. Are we then doomed to be helpless victims of the circumstances? Is there then no way out? There is. We need only remember the cardinal principle of the philosophy we profess, viz. Marxism. Man is the maker of his destiny. But Marxism is not conceived as a philosophy. It has been degraded to what is called "a revolutionary technique" to be with the masses, at all cost. The man, however, must differentiate himself from the masses before he can be the maker of his destiny. To be radical is to grasp the matter by its root. Now, "the root of mankind is man himself." That is not my opinion. That is a quotation from Marx. Intelligence, the ability to control emotion with reason, differentiates man from the masses.

While not underestimating the importance of the role emotion plays in human behaviour, our political practice must be guided

by intelligence. There must be a clear understanding of what we are doing, and for what purpose we are doing a particular thing. That is the essence of scientific politics.

Now, comrades, as I told you in the beginning, it would not be proper for me to anticipate the discussion. I only took the liberty of outlining a procedure, a method for our discussions. But if you feel that a different method will yield greater results, you are at liberty to choose it. The method recommended by me is the tradition of the first Dehradun Camp, where our party was born. This Camp will show if we are still true to that tradition. But you are free to turn your back on that tradition; only, in that case, the Camp should celebrate the liquidation of the Radical Democratic Party. On the other hand, loyalty to our own past commits us to a certain way of approaching problems, some rules of procedure and a certain methodology. These are not arbitrarily laid down. They logically follow from the philosophy of our politics. Political practice without a philosophy is a vulgar scramble for power.

If we can approach the problems which have grown out of our experience, which are facing entire humanity and are baffling it, with that spirit, a patrimony of ours, I am sure we shall be able to find solutions. In any case, that is the correct approach to the problems, and as such is sure to yield the desired result eventually; if we fail, others will succeed. Let us blaze the trail, and have the satisfaction of pioneering.

The second Dehradun Camp will go down in history with the credit of having explained why the Radicals selected a burning torch as their emblem. Politics is a form of human activity. Human life must be guided by a philosophy. That philosophy may change from time to time. But there are certain values, certain principles, which transcend time and space. Otherwise we shall have to lose faith in the progress of humanity. How can we judge that civilisation is a progress from barbarism? There must be something common to barbarism and civilisation. We can judge that this or that thing distinguishes civilisation as a greater human endeavour, and therefore civilisation is a progress from barbarism. Otherwise, there is no standard for measuring progress, and no ground to believe that civilisation is better than barbarism.

Therefore, a philosophy, to be a guide for all forms of human action, must have some ethics, some morals, which must recognise certain things as permanent and abiding in humanity. And only a group of human beings—be it a political party or any other kind of organisation—primarily moved by those abiding (and I should say even permanent, as permanent as humanity itself) values, can claim to be the maker of the future.

Others making that claim may be successful in destroying the past, but only to make a frightful mess of the present, and experience occasions grave doubts about their ability to make a future good enough for free men to live in. We not only want to create a new world; we want to know what kind of a world we are going to create. We must know what is freedom before we can be qualified as the architects of a free world. What the world needs is a philosophy of freedom. The birth of the Radical Democratic Party was heralded by the declaration that India needs a philosophical revolution. Without a philosophical revolution, no social revolution is possible. We shall have to remember that. We cannot make philosophical revolution by learning fallacious theories, sticking to exploded dogmas and running after false ideals.

We shall have to learn not only from our own experience, but from the experience of entire humanity. With that spirit of catholicity, with the humility of the seeker after truth, and with the greatest ambition of man to be free, it should be possible for us to make this Camp a historical event. The discussion here should give us the conviction that, in spite of all difficulties, the Radical Democratic Party has not only a place in this country, but has something to contribute to the struggle for the freedom of civilised humanity.

But let me not put you in a mood of optimism. Because, scepticism and pessimism are the most reliable guides to human action. Optimism is foolishness. Only scepticism and pessimism lead us to truth. But, on the other hand, if we are oppressed, if we think there is nothing left for us to do, we might be overwhelmed. Therefore, I shall conclude by recollecting a sentence from my inaugural address at the first Dehradun Camp. I said that one became a revolutionary by facing difficulties with the determination of overcoming them. If that will still

be the guiding principle of our party we shall be able to practise scientific politics even in the atmosphere of rank irrationalism. In the absence of difficulties, there will be nothing for us to do. Difficulties call us into existence. By overcoming them we shall prove ourselves capable of acting according to the cardinal principle of our philosophy—man is the maker of his destiny.

To-day there are many more great difficulties before us than in 1940. But at the same time, we have been steeled by six years' experience. It has not only made us more efficient as political workers; it should have also made better thinkers of us. At least a few philosophers must have grown in the ranks of the Radical Democratic Party. Its aspiration should be to be the breeding ground of philosophers, so that for the first time light will radiate from the East, to illuminate the rest of the world. Comrades, hold the burning torch firmly in hand, to blaze a new trail towards the cherished ideal of freedom.

THE TWO PSYCHOSES

Our party does not suffer from the disease of leadership. At the time of the first Dehradun Camp, we were all new. Then I happened to be the seniormost, with a little more experience. The seeds sown six years ago have grown up into trees bearing fruits. There are many others to-day in the party who can speak on every subject as well as myself. Therefore it is no longer necessary for me to do all the talking. For another reason, I did not want to participate in the discussion so early. We claim to cherish some principles, or profess to do so. It is time to test our conviction. Is it deep enough? Or have we been fooling ourselves? We must take measure, because the depth of our conviction will be the measure of our success, and guarantee the future of our party. Unrestrained expression of the views and sentiments of all present here is necessary for a correct judgement. Therefore, I wanted to be rather an observer than an actor in this drama. I did not want to impose my opinion and influence your judgement. Even now I do not propose to do anything of the kind. I am participating in the discussion earlier than I wished only to put it on the right track.

The impression I have gathered from the discussion until now is that the purpose of this Camp is not very clear to many of you. From the replies received from various provincial organisations to the earlier circulars regarding the Camp, it was clear that the purpose of the Camp had not been fully grasped by the party as a whole. A final circular was issued, and accidentally I happened to draft it. In that circular, it was made clear that this Camp was not meant to be a party conference, not a formally representative body, not a meeting

of delegates or delegations. It was going to be a meeting of those members of the party who have had the opportunity of acquiring the greatest amount of experience, particularly during the last elections, as well as during the recent history of our party, and also of those comrades who have shown the aptitude to think out their own thoughts on the basis of that experience. It was felt that, if those two groups of comrades incorporating the theory and practice of the party, the best that has been produced by the party in the line of intellectual development as well as maximum experience, came together as individuals, not representing party units, but to exchange notes, discuss problems born of our experience, it would be possible to make some addition to our intellectual equipment acquired in the first Dehradun Camp, and which since then has become the foundation of our party and its activities.

Unfortunately, it seems this point was not driven home to the party as a whole. I dare say there are individual comrades who understood the purpose of the Camp and came here with the proper spirit and some of them have already made valuable contributions; and I hope that, before we disperse, more of such contributions will be made. In order that we do not deviate from our purpose, I want to submit for your consideration what I consider to be the fundamental problems which should attract the attention of the leading members of the party. In the first Dehradun Camp, Comrade Safdar, who is absent to-day, made some observations which are worth remembering. He said that a party was like a sack of potatoes, the organisation being the sack and the members the potatoes; but if you take the sack away, the potatoes will all get scattered and you can take them nowhere.

The emphasis on the rank and file is an expression of a religious mentality; it is a new God. In this critical moment, neither rank and file nor their activity nor the masses can save the country. Only individuals, as individuals, can react to the crisis. Thinking, which must precede action, is done by individuals. Neither history nor the party can do without individuals. We felt that those members of our party, who can measure themselves up to the crisis as epoch-making, event-creating individuals, should get together here, discuss the burning issues

and deduce certain fundamental principles—not tactical ideas, but fundamental principles—for the future guidance of our party.

The agenda and synopsis of the discussion are already in your possession. It is not necessary for me to recapitulate them. But I may draw your attention to the fundamental problems underlying this discussion here. Although there are different items on the agenda, yet they are all interrelated. The Central Secretariat had to work two days before the agenda could be formulated in the present form. All issues appeared to be jumbled together; if they were not put in their proper sequence and relation, the discussion was bound to be rambling and confused. We could get lost in details while basic issues had to be joined. Nothing positive would then result from this Camp.

Much has been talked about political activity. Deprecating remarks have been made about theoreticians who can only talk and write. A political party, of course, is an organisation for action. But one of the features which distinguishes the Radical Democratic Party from other parties in India and also abroad is the belief that organised thought is the condition for planned action. It should be clear to you that that is a corollary to one of the lessons we have learned from history: there can be no political revolution without a philosophical revolution. First we must learn to think, then only can we work systematically. This Camp is meant to be a school to learn thinking. The first Camp was a school where we graduated in thinking; after six years, we have come here for a post-graduate course. We have to learn still more.

Members of the Central Secretariat have praised and appreciated the work of the party, and I fully subscribe to the sentiments expressed by them. But you will excuse me if I add some unpleasant observations. The impression I have gathered from the discussion until now is that the fundamentals of Radicalism have not yet been fully grasped by a large number of members of the party. I lay emphasis on the word Radicalism. I shall show that it is something different from Communism, Socialism or any other brand of "leftism". Otherwise, it would be a fraud to call ourselves Radical Democrats. If we were Socialists or Communists or something else, why should

we hide ourselves under a new label? We have chosen a new name because we are not satisfied with the philosophies underlying the theory and practice of other political parties. A group of people inspired by certain philosophical principles, by a certain view of life, logically has a distinctive approach to all problems of life, including politics, trade unionism, propaganda, agitation, and everything else. Radicalism is not revolutionary Nationalism, nor is it slightly heretical Communism. It is a distinctive philosophy. Confusion naturally results from the failure to be aware of the very reason of our separate political existence. Tarkunde has pointed out that we are measuring our success and failure not by our own standard, but by the standard of others. We have not tried to measure our success and failure by our own standard, because many of us are ignorant of our standard. Therefore, the first thing for this Camp to do is to clarify what we are. Are we camouflaged Communists, little redder Socialists, or a little more honest bourgeois-democrats? What are we? Let us be clear on that point. Then it will be easy to judge what shall we do or what should we have done. That will be a simple question of logical deduction.

We are revolutionaries, and revolution has only two connotations in India: A revolutionary must be anti-British. But even Tatas and Birlas are revolutionary in the anti-British sense. Then there is a higher type of revolutionaries, who call themselves anti-imperialists, to distinguish themselves, nominally, from the more discrediting anti-British company. The unsophisticated patriots are frankly moved by racialism; the others are equally so, but they paint their patriotism red and roar as the liberators of the proletariat. The masses generally won't do, because the honest nationalists also claim to be the champions of the masses, and therefore call themselves revolutionaries. If revolution is monopolised between these two, and we call ourselves also revolutionaries, then we must belong to one or the other of those groups. But we parted company with one of them on the issue of India's relation to the anti-fascist war, and with the other much earlier. For five years, we have existed as a separate party. Yet most of you are still anxious to square your revolutionary conscience with the belief that you are no worse than the others—that you are also anti-British and anti-

imperialists. You seem to believe that our decision to support the anti-fascist war, may be our anti-Fascism itself, was a tactical move.

The result of the discussions of the first Dehradun Camp published in the book "Scientific Politics" having been at your disposal all the time, you might have come to this Camp in a different frame of mind. We did not outline only a plan of action, a cleverer tactic than that of the Congress or the Communists or other parties; it was more than a clarification of generally accepted theories; more than an objective and realistic analysis of relation of classes. It was even more than a statement of some ideological problems. It was an entirely new approach to all the problems political, social, economic—problems which have been before India for years; problems which have been baffling other parties. Our approach was fundamentally different from others because it was philosophical. We believe that politics and economics, being concerned with different aspects of life, must be guided by a philosophy of life. Otherwise, politics becomes mere scramble for power and economics degenerates into selfishness. In any case, at the first Dehradun Camp we brought a philosophical attitude and scientific method to bear upon the problems of politics and social reconstruction. Therefore we called our politics scientific politics.

But at that time, we were still groping in the dark, so to say. It was not yet possible for us to formulate a beautifully self-contained system of philosophy. We could only indicate certain tendencies, anticipate certain developments. After six years' experience, we have met here to-day to give a better, a more articulate shape to the philosophy outlined in the first Dehradun Camp. If that was not the purpose, I would not be here. I am not satisfied with the prevailing theories and practices of politics, be it bourgeois or communist politics, American or French politics, British Labour politics or Stalin's Bolshevik politics. It does not hold out any hope for the tormented, bewildered and beguiled humanity. Of course, my feeling may be of no consequence. You need not take it seriously. But having professed to advocate politics with a philosophy, you must think seriously. Having claimed to

cherish a high ideal, you should not debase and ridicule it because now you would rather go back on it than to travel the way of pioneers, which is never strewn with the roses of popularity and immediate success.

After two years' discussion throughout the party, we finally chose the flaming torch as our emblem. It was not a fanciful choice, it was no light-hearted selection. The emblem symbolises the distinctiveness of our politics. It indicates that our politics is based on enlightenment. It is not merely anti-British or anti-imperialist, which means the same thing. We believe that without a conscious will to freedom on the part of the masses, freedom is bound to be a fraud, no matter which class comes to power. Yet, the idea of a political party advocating enlightenment, holding high the emblem of a flaming torch, appears to be ridiculous to a young member of the party, who spoke with great enthusiasm to lay emphasis on activity as against theorising. What he meant is that we should imitate other "revolutionary" parties, and do better. We should go to the masses. Of course, we should; but with what purpose? What is our idea of revolution? What is our notion of freedom? If on these fundamental questions there is no difference between us and other parties, then why should we have a different party? Those who are not prepared to raise these questions and answer them boldly and honestly, more honestly than boldly, will be wasting their time here.

If you only want to fight Imperialism or establish a dictatorship of the proletariat why are you here, ploughing a lone furrow? Go to those who also want nothing more than that, and your efforts will be more fruitful. If you have the patience to plough a lone furrow which may not lead anywhere in our whole life time, if you share the belief that all the bombastic plans of national or world reconstruction promised by other parties are quack remedies, and that humanity needs something more than that, only then will you be at home here. This is a camp of Radicals. A clear grasp of the fundamental principles of Radicalism should be the basis of our discussions. Alternatively, some of you should stand up and say that for six years we have been chasing a chimera, and demand the liquidation of the Radical Democratic Party.

Our party is not a political machine which holds that the end justifies any means. Its philosophy is not Jesuistic. Our political philosophy makes room for the individual, and moral value. Its basic principle is that man is the measure of all things. We judge the merit of any social order by the freedom it gives to its individual members. That is our "new philosophy", which has enabled us to discover the new way of revolution. As a matter of fact, it is a very old philosophy. All prophets of human freedom, in all ages, were inspired by this philosophy, which places man in the centre of the world. "Revolutionary" philosophies which hold that freedom is conditional upon individual's sacrificing himself on the altar of a collective ego, be that the State or the Nation or a Class, have debased politics, and thrown the world in the present crisis. We want to revive the old philosophy of freedom to purify politics, so to say and contribute to the solution of the crisis. I may once again remind you that Karl Marx also regarded man as the root of things.

Now let me turn to the supposed organisational weakness of our party, which seems to be troubling most of you. No doubt, we have weaknesses. But the organisational problem has to be correctly posed to be solved. Tarkunde has done that yesterday. Strictly speaking, it is not an organisational question. It also can be referred to the question of the fundamental principles of our politics. In the last analysis, the so-called organisational questions result from the confusion about the object of the organisation. The specific organisational structure of our party logically follows from its programme and policy. If the programme and policy are not wrong, there is nothing wrong with our organisational structure. The programme and policy of the party again are determined by the ideal we want to attain. Once the ideal is clearly grasped, and conviction is fortified by intelligence, the rest logically follows. Therefore, our political practice is rational. Yet, there are internal defects in the functioning of the party. Why is that so? This problem has been puzzling me for years.

I am not worried by the limited success of the party. Our ideal is not easily attained. I have patience. We must first forge the instrument necessary for the task we have set to our-

selves. The party is the instrument. Therefore, I am primarily concerned with the internal growth of the party. The success of our external activity depends upon many factors beyond our control. Objective conditions may retard the quantitative development of the party. But its qualitative growth is independent of them. We may not be able to increase our membership rapidly enough, and numerical weakness has not permitted us to expand our activity. But our programme is bound to have an irresistible appeal for the people. It must only be placed before them, be explained to them. In a vast country like ours, that initial task requires a vast army of political workers. Some comrades complained that there is no emotional appeal in our politics; but none suggested what should be the form of that emotional appeal. So, even those who are dissatisfied do not know what is to be done. There is plenty of emotional appeal in our programme. But it has to be carried to those who will be moved by it. We have not been able to do that because, so long as racial nationalism will be the predominating popular emotion, our party will be numerically small. But why should it not grow qualitatively? Why should not every member be a hundred per cent Radical? This question has been troubling me all the time since we organised the party. Unpopularity does not perturb me. Slandorous propaganda leaves me also unperturbed. I believe that in the midst of almost overwhelming difficulties our party has done very well. It is sure to do better in the fulness of time. Meanwhile, it should grow internally, so that, when the time comes, it shall be able to catch it by the forelock. What could prevent us from being hundred per cent successful in that respect?

While listening to the speeches, the answer has suddenly dawned on me. A large number of members of the Radical Democratic Party are still suffering from a psychosis—the psychosis of Nationalism. That is quite natural. One cannot run away from one's shadow. They were all born and bred politically in the atmosphere of Nationalism. They attained political maturity in that atmosphere. Most of us have lived through the stormy experience of the racial-nationalist movement. The impression of that experience of political adolescence has sunk deep into your subconscious mind. That is how

a psychosis is formed. It influences your emotions without your knowing it. Intelligence and reason may try to function as censors—custodians of our Radical conscience. But the sub-conscious being the nine-tenth of mind, the Radical conscience is only skin-deep. Emotion—the nationalist psychosis—surging mightily out of the subconscious, overwhelms intelligence and reason. Hence the cry for some emotional appeal. You don't know : but you are demanding that our politics should have more of racialism !

Our party must outgrow this psychological crisis. If it cannot, there is no future for it. Because, the nationalist psychosis is antagonistic to our philosophy; Nationalism cannot be reconciled with Radicalism. A conscious nationalist will reject Radicalism, and be an honest counter-revolutionary, a conscious Fascist. A Radical dominated by the nationalist psychosis will be hypocrite, because he is neither a nationalist nor a Radical. Many members of our party still labour sub-consciously under a guilty conscience: We are not sufficiently anti-British, anti-imperialist; therefore we are not revolutionaries. That feeling, unworthy of a true Radical, inhibits the activity of the party more than any other cause. Our programme does not lack emotional appeal; only, it does not measure up to your emotions. Many of you have a dual personality. Emotionally, you are nationalists; intellectually, rationalist; philosophically, nothing.

That is my clue to the solution of the organisational problem. I pass it on to you; make any use of it you can. If you think it is no good, throw it away. But I am convinced that the problem is psychological. The nationalist psychosis is the most potent factor which has prevented a better internal growth of the party. Our task is to remove the psychosis. A psychopathological case requires a psycho-analytical treatment. The patient must be made conscious of the cause of his disease. Because of this psychological contradiction many party members seem to be baffled and frustrated. I have listened to the speeches. There has been some criticism, some enthusiasm, some pessimism and some optimism also. But on the whole, not many of you seem to be free from the feeling of frustration. It is a natural feeling. We resolved to do something; we failed.

But in reality, your imagination is betraying you. Labouring under nationalist psychosis, you believed that a revolutionary party should do certain things. What the party resolved to do was something different. You believed that the new way of revolution was preferable because it would be a short-cut. The party could not accomplish what you believed it expected to do. But anti-Fascism was not pragmatic politics. We did not expect the British Government to reward us for supporting the war. We did not rely upon the British Democracy to place us in power. So, the party has not failed. There is no reason to feel frustrated. On the contrary, the party has come nearer to its ideal than it was six years ago. I shall revert to this later on when we shall discuss our fundamentals.

In a state of frustration and hopelessness, when one feels that the party has not functioned properly, but cannot make any concrete suggestion for improvement, one ought to go mad. In such a state, people do become hysteric and imagine things for consolation. Some of you seek consolation in finding fault with the leadership, and in the imagination that British Democracy has failed us. Our programme is good and we must stand by it; we are all convinced and steadfast Radicals. But the leadership of the party could not guide it properly; they did not let the rank and file do what they wanted to do; and finally British Democracy left us in the lurch. This feeling of self-righteousness and the catalogue of imaginary grievances against others serve the purpose of squaring conscience—of shirking the real issue. Why should we think that British Democracy has failed us? If you think that we expected much from it, then I must say that you did not read even the resolutions of the party. We only assumed that a party of the Indian people could count upon the sympathy of British Democracy. But we had to build up that party of the Indian people, to begin with. None would do that for us. This grudge against British Democracy is born of the racial-nationalist psychosis: nothing good can ever come out of England; every Englishman is an imperialist; there is no such thing as democracy in Britain; it was a mistake to place any faith in British Democracy; that was a deviation from the path of revolution!

The crimes of omission and commission of the British

Labour Government have been catalogued here. I have no reason to defend the British Labour Government, nor do I want to hold a prejudiced opinion. Some comrades said that the Labour Government is following Tory policy. They took their cue from the nationalist and Communist press; and Communism in our country is Nationalism painted red. Finally there is Russian opinion which also condemns the British Labour Government as imperialist. To believe unquestioningly whatever comes from Moscow, has come to be another revolutionary standard. But is it a revolutionary virtue to be blind to obvious facts? Read the history of diplomacy, and you will find a striking similarity between the present Soviet diplomacy and the diplomacy of Tzarist Russia. Why, then, don't you quarrel with Comrade Stalin? Why do you believe that everything the Russians do in Persia and elsewhere is all for revolution, and all that Bevin does is counter-revolutionary? That is not an objective attitude. That is prejudice. The Socialist President of the British Board of Trade has come to make a pact with the Indian bourgeoisie; we have severely condemned the British Labour Government's formally democratic approach to the Indian problem. We have characterised this policy as helping Indian Fascism. The projected pact with Indian National-Capitalism will be a conspiracy against Indian freedom as well as against British Democracy. But what about Stalin making a pact with Hitler when it suited his purpose? We defended it, and I shall still defend it. Stalin did it to gain time. Why do you blame Bevin if he tries to consolidate the position of the Labour Government? They are also playing for time. Labour must win the next elections. For that purpose, they may have to go slow.

British Imperialism is going. The nationalists now thunder against Labour Imperialism. As revolutionaries, we must not lag behind; we must imitate! We must leaven up our politics with the anti-British emotional appeal even when Britain is on the way to Socialism! They applaud Soekarno's Republic, made in Japan; frustrated Fascists in other Asiatic countries are taken to be champions of democracy. Only British Labour cannot be trusted, and Bevin must be cursed as Churchill's under-study. With these complexes of racial nationalist psycho-

sis, you are naturally critical of our ever relying upon support from British Democracy. I am afraid that is only skin-deep Radicalism. Your feeling of frustration is due to the immaturity of your Radicalism. The party has succeeded in proportion as it was radical.

The inter-relation between the economic structure of Britain and other parts of the British Empire is a very important question raised by Shib Ray. Professor Parikh has answered it. We may have to revert to the subject. For the moment, I shall make a few general observations. Suppose we expected British Democracy to help us; suppose we assumed that the success of democratic freedom in India was conditional on the help of British Democracy; would there be anything wrong in that? Did not great revolutionaries like Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders also expect the world revolution to come to their aid? Their expectation was not fulfilled. If it was quite alright for the infallible Bolsheviks to expect help which did not come, why should you think that it was wrong for us to have expected from British Democracy what it has failed to do? And it may yet be proved that our expectation was not misplaced. The British Labour Government has actually sent a mission to hand over power to those they believe to be representatives of the Indian people. After all, it is a foregone conclusion now that the coveted National Government will be established in India by the grace of British Democracy. So, we were not much mistaken in our expectation which was based on faith in democracy. We plead guilty to having that faith.

I may remind you of a few facts of our party history. Since the meeting of the Central Executive Committee in September 1943, when we placed the question of elections before the party, in article after article in the 'Independent India' we said that the war was over—and we said so even two years before the war was actually over; we dropped the war issue and hardly talked about the war any more. Some sort of a short-cut to revolution during the war now being out of question, we had to work with a long perspective. We anticipated that within two years after the war new elections would be held; we resolved to agitate for the introduction of universal franchise before the next elections. We did not take it for granted that universal

suffrage would be introduced on our demand. We resolved to fight the elections even on the present franchise. We also pointed out how, even under that handicap, a people's party, all other things being equal, stood a fair chance of winning a good number of seats. We said that the future of our party and of India would depend on the result of the coming elections. For two years, we carried on propaganda for adult suffrage, and also to prepare the party to participate in the elections under any circumstances. We did not expect the party to sweep the polls. Finally, the resolution of the Bombay meeting of the Central Political Council in September 1945 set a target before the party: it was a modest target. We believed that, if we could win a dozen seats in each province, we should be in a position to influence the political future of our country. Even that small measure of success attained by a party functioning under most unfavourable circumstances, under all sorts of difficulties, would have proved that it was a factor in the country not to be disregarded. We held that, in that case, British Democracy would be compelled to take notice of it. We failed, for reasons beyond our control. The election was neither fair nor free. It was a typically fascist election. In the given atmosphere, no party like ours could do any better. Even with their emotional anti-imperialist appeal the Communists, who moreover seemed to have plenty of money, also failed before the onslaught of totalitarian Nationalism. The negative result of the election, therefore, is not the measure of the position of our party. I still believe that in a free and fair election we could capture more than a dozen seats in each province even with the present narrow franchise, and I also believe that such a show of strength on the part of a democratic party would have enabled the British Labour Government to tackle the Indian situation differently.

However, the point I want to make is that we did not tell the party that British Democracy was like Santa Claus waiting for the opportunity to bring us a present. Labour was in power in Britain; if a party like ours placed itself on the political map of India, as they see it, that party could not be neglected; and once the Radical Democratic Party was recognised as a factor to be contended with, it would be able to influence the

future of the country. That was the line of our thought. Evidently, we did not expect a present from British Democracy, nor did British Democracy betray us.

We never had any illusion; we never expected anything from anybody, for nothing. We were not functioning in a vacuum. We never said that our position in India would be directly influenced by the political situation in Britain. We only said that a democratic government in Britain was more likely to attach importance to cooperation with a democratic party in India, if such a party existed and was strong enough. Already in the Lucknow Conference of our party at the end of 1942, we said that the war was no longer a major issue for us, and gave the call for fighting Fascism on the home front. I would ask you to recollect the concluding passage of Sinha's speech at the Lucknow Conference. He said that the Radical Democratic Party must become the decisive factor in the political life of our country, and then only would India be able to attain her freedom. Self-confidence has all along been the keynote of our political practice. It results from our philosophy. Those who have not grasped the philosophical principles underlying our politics are naturally overwhelmed by the apparently discouraging experience of the last few years.

One or two words about the new way of revolution, another red herring, according to some speeches made here. It would appear from these speeches that, in 1940, the leaders of the party, frightened by the spectre of revolution, sank in the mire of opportunism, made fantasies about the new way of revolution and led the party in a blind-alley. That again is a misreading of the history of the party, ignoring its genesis, missing the perspective of its political practice. The new way of revolution was not a figment of our escapist imagination. We talked about it at the Lucknow Conference. Read the minutes to refresh your memory. Having analysed the international situation, we came to the conclusion that the impending revolution could no longer take place on the old pattern, that the whole world was moving towards a new way, and India as a part of the world must fall in line. At that time, the new way was not clearly visible. But it was as clear as day-light that the old way was a blind-alley. If there is any man in his senses who would

still disregard the fact of the complete collapse of powerful Communist Parties in the midst of revolutionary crises, and refuse to learn from that tragic experience the obvious lesson that the world has entered into a new epoch of history when the old ways of revolution are closed, then, with not very high opinion of his intelligence, I would beg to differ. The stormy rise of Fascism proved the incompetence of Communist tactics. The final victory of Fascism meant defeat of Communism. In the earlier stages of the anti-Fascist war, Communist Parties were thoroughly discredited. But the Communist Parties were the sea-green incorruptibles; they may make mistakes, but their theory must be right, under all circumstances! Every word of the Communist Manifesto, written nearly a hundred years ago, is as true today as it was then. If one disagrees, he is a counter-revolutionary. That seems to be the opinion of some comrades who have spoken here. That is measuring yourself up to the standards of other people with whom you pretend to believe that what we did was only a camouflage, and perhaps some of our leaders might have had social-democratic opportunist deviations.

The liquidation of the Communist International bore out the analysis of the world situation we had made at the Lucknow Conference of our party. It was an authoritative admission that the old way of revolution was closed. In the book "The Communist International", we laid bare the causes of the failure of the Communist movement. The development of capitalist economy did not take the pattern set by Karl Marx; the modern State is too powerful to be overthrown as at the time of the French Revolution or of the Russian Revolution; the modern weapons and the modern technique of military operations have rendered the old technique of revolution—seizure of power through insurrection—impossible. That being so, if a radical reconstruction of society was still a historical necessity, there should be other methods of attaining the object; a new way, or new ways, of revolution must be discovered. Fanatically holding on to an untenable faith won't do. It is permissible for revolutionaries to be intelligent as well as indomitable.

We scanned the horizon of Europe and detected certain

tendencies which indicated the possibility of the impending revolution finding a new way in order to escape complete defeat. That was as far back as the Lucknow Conference of our party. The old ways of revolution appeared to be even more impossible in India. Yet, no new way seemed to open up before us immediately. On the contrary events moved steadily towards counter-revolution. Fascism thrived with the fraudulent cry of freedom, and with the aid and connivance of the established State. Under the given relation of forces, very little could be done to check the fatal process, even if we chose to travel the old way of revolution. In such moments, the patience and far-sightedness of revolutionaries are severely taxed. Fascists and counter-revolutionaries were talking of revolution. Should revolutionaries join the crazy chorus and dig the grave of revolution? The progressive forces in the country being not nearly strong enough, the impending catastrophe of Fascism capturing power might be avoided only by the accident of British Democracy intervening. The Russian Revolution was an accident; in India also, revolution might take place by an accident. While not ruling out the possibility of an accident, we reorientated our political practice to a long perspective.

Whatever might happen or might not happen in our country, Europe is travelling the new way of revolution, the way which we discovered in 1942. The most red-hot revolutionaries no longer go to the barricades, but to the polling booths. Parliamentary electoral campaigns have replaced insurrection. The demand for proletarian dictatorship has been quietly set aside; Communist Parties now are participating in coalition governments with non-proletarian parties. They are travelling the new way of revolution, even in countries occupied by the Red Army. There, proletarian dictatorships could be established any day. But they would most probably precipitate an international clash, which might put an end to all revolution. Therefore, revolutionary dogmas are discarded.

Years before wisdom dawned on others, who were too powerful to rely upon intelligence, we discovered the new way, out of ordinary common sense. A little of rationalism made us non-conformists, and enabled us to break away from dogmas.

When the experience of a whole generation was that the old ways of revolution lead only from defeat to defeat, and ultimately to the triumph of counter-revolution, we had enough sense to see that there was something wrong with those ways. Searching for a new way, we felt the necessity for the political education of the people manning the State machinery. That appeared to be a deviation from the doctrine of non-cooperation. But should political untouchability go even to the extent of refusing to educate State employees? Can enemies be persuaded to see our point of view? I shall answer the question later; it involves our philosophy, and indicates our approach to the new way of revolution.

The success of revolution depends on three conditions. One of them is the breakdown of the established State. What does that mean? It means decomposition of the social basis of the established political regime. When a particular social order decomposes, all its members do not go over to the camp of counter-revolution. Decomposition of a social order creates an atmosphere of psychological confusion, helplessness, hopelessness, frustration. Revolution opens up a perspective; so does counter-revolution also. Now, if revolution is better than counter-revolution and offers greater freedom, and if human nature is not essentially bad, then, in a great social crisis, the perspective of revolutionary changes should have a stronger appeal for all but the morally depraved. If we believed that the human being is a thinking animal, then we should also believe that, in that crisis, revolutionaries have at least as much chance of winning over the atomised members of the dying social order as counter-revolution. Only, revolutionaries should have patience and perseverance, instead of being swayed by passions like hatred.

We are living in an atmosphere of complete disintegration of the established social order. Revolution and counter-revolution are both on the order of the day. If force is the deciding factor, then the dice are loaded against revolution. Its success is conditional upon the ability of its votaries to act as the personification of the high ideals cherished by humanity since the dawn of civilisation, as the defenders of imperishable human values. That is the new way of revolution : revolution

by consent, or by persuasion, if you like. But that will not be persuasion by propaganda, but persuasion by history. Why do you think that we are the chosen few? We belong to the middle-class, and there are millions and millions of people belonging to the same class, brought up in same atmosphere, with more or less the same education. We have come to the conclusion that neither bourgeois society nor the Fascist, "New Order" can establish human freedom; history has taught us the lesson. Given the necessary political education, and assuming that they are not irredeemable, others can also learn the lesson and act accordingly.

In addition to the nationalist psychosis, there is yet another minor psychosis, which has been inhibiting activities according to our professed political ideas and principles; indeed, even preventing a clear understanding of these. Some of our members still believe that Radicalism is nothing more than a "slightly heretical Communism", as Philip Spratt has put it. With that belief, they are naturally ashamed of doing anything which does not conform with the standards of Communist conduct. From what I have said, it should be clear that Radicalism is not camouflaged Communism. We shall have to get over the major nationalist psychosis as well as the minor Communist psychosis, if we believe that we have something new to contribute to the political thought and practice, not only of our country, but of the world as a whole. A political party which represents such a sharp departure from the beaten track must be armed with a philosophy of its own, must have a fresh approach to the problems of life. It is not an accident that the Radical Democratic Party was born of the crisis precipitated by the anti-Fascist war. It represented the repercussion of new ideas which have been crystallising throughout the world during the last five or six years. We have made some contribution to the new movement of ideas, which are bound to shape the political practice and social behaviour of the coming age. That is not a negligible record. Bearing that in mind, you should be able to get over the inferiority complex resulting from the double psychosis.

If you want the Radical Democratic Party to exist, if you want that your party should have a future, you shall have to

go back from this Camp with the conviction that you are not Communists, but Radical Democrats, and Radical Democrats are something different and something better than Communists—hundred times better. The Communists are old-fashioned revolutionaries. History will give them that much credit—and no more.

In a postscript to an article written on the eve of the Calcutta Conference of our party at the end of 1944, I wrote that, whatever might be the relation of forces in Europe at that time, revolution would march forward but no longer under the banner of Communism. Four years earlier, I had written that Communism was among the first casualties of the war. The march of events in Europe during the previous decade should have driven any critical student of history to that conclusion. I had reached it before the Radical Democratic Party was formed. The formation of our party, therefore, was in tune with the spirit of our time.

By all means, let us review our past critically; but let us have our own standards. There is a lack of clarity on this score. Therefore, so far, the discussion has emphasised on details, begging the fundamental issues. I wanted to draw your attention to those issues. We have met here to discuss fundamental problems. Let us turn to them. What is Radicalism? For us, that is the question of all questions. Once we know clearly what we stand for, it will become evident what we should do under changing circumstances.

LESSONS OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

What I said on the last occasion was rather unexpected, and many comrades felt very uneasy about it. Now that our party is entering into a very decisive period of its existence, it is not very good for it to be in that psychological state. What we need now is a strong conviction and faith. It is said that faith can move mountains. Before we could find a new faith, which will be acceptable to all, as all the great faiths of the world were accepted, it is foolish to undermine the old faith, and I am afraid whatever I said on the last occasion amounted to that foolishness. I did not want to proceed with that. But after Karnik's provocation, backed up by no less a person than Shastriji, there is no getting away from it.

Nevertheless, I would try to stick to my original decision of not placing before you ideas and ideals which may appear to be very greatly different from those which we have been pursuing all the time. But I must also admit that during the last several years I have been feeling very dissatisfied. Time and again, I discussed with some friends the doubts which were rising in my mind, and the problems which were worrying me. Shastriji has just now borne evidence to the fact that I was something like a tormented soul. I make a greater confession. My whole political life, which is now nearly forty years old, has been nothing but a tormented soul's search for freedom. I am afraid I have not been able to impart that urge of mine to many with whom I came in contact. Because, after all, when we are participating in politics, we shall have to deal with problems which cannot be always stated absolutely, and which cannot be always solved disregarding the context of the realities of our existence. As a matter of fact, I may tell you that

I feel very uncomfortable in politics. I feel like a fish out of water. But having been drawn into this whirlpool since my early youth, I have not been able to get out of it. Perhaps the time is coming when I shall at last do so. I hinted at that yesterday when I tried to explain, as I understand them, the difficulties which seem to make the so-called organisational problem baffling for many of you. I traced the difficulties to a double psychosis on the part of a great majority of members of the Radical Democratic Party, and I expressed the opinion that, if the R.D.P. can overcome these psychoses, only then it will have a future; otherwise it has none. I do not know how you would feel if it came to be the latter case. I should be free. I should have peace. Having observed the reaction created by my foolishness of the day before yesterday, I have been feeling that perhaps my day of deliverance is nearing.

In any case, I am afraid that Karnik has left you with an expectation which will not be fulfilled. Nor need you have any apprehension. I am not going to expound a new philosophy. Because, there is none. The thoughts that have passed through and taken shape in my mind from time to time have been recorded, though not always very explicitly or elaborately, and partially published. The published part, a very small fraction of the recorded thoughts, nevertheless gives an indication of the whole. And I thought that it was noted by the members of the party. If they did, they would not be so terribly flabbergasted by what I said the day before yesterday. Because, what I said then I had said on many previous occasions. But the trouble is that we do not live integrally. We live in moments after moments. There is no connection between the various moments of our existence. However, let me recollect exactly what are the heresies I preached the day before yesterday.

Your attention has been drawn to the fact that the germs of those heresies could be found in the book "Scientific Politics" which is the record of our discussions in the first Dehradun Camp. My criticism of what could be called orthodox Marxism and my scepticism about the possibilities of Communism, though not quite freely expressed in the Dehradun Camp six years ago, were inherent in what I said on that occasion. Only a critical view of Marxism and a sceptical

attitude towards the practice of Communism could have induced us to get out of the beaten track of orthodox revolutionary practice and strike out a new path to the goal of freedom. In other words, but for a certain measure of independence on our part in approaching the problems of the theory and practice of revolution, there would be no Radical Democratic Party. Therefore I maintained the day before yesterday that the foundation of the R.D.P. was not a matter of tactics; it was not a temporary move of one group of Communists practising correct tactics as against another group going the wrong way tactically. We did not simply reverse the signboard of our shop and R.D.P. on the frontside when C.P. remained written on the back, to be exhibited again in due time. We were not playing hide and seek. We were acting intelligently with an honest conviction, having no intention of deceiving ourselves or others. Therefore, it greatly surprises me to find Dharitry Gangulee, who was present in the first Dehradun Camp, after six years still labouring under the belief that the Radical Democratic Party was only a signboard to hide our Communism. But I am also glad. My psycho-analytical treatment has been successful. The patient has become conscious of the psychosis. I hope more than one will react similarly. Either they will be cured and become confirmed Radicals, or have the moral courage to revert consciously to the old faith which they have never outgrown.

This amazing persistence of atavisms could be due only to one or the other of the following reasons: Either all this time I have been trying to express some ideas without making them sufficiently intelligible for you to grasp; or they did not convey a strong enough conviction to you. In the latter case, what kept the R.D.P. together? If it was a question of personal loyalty, I wonder what is the basis of that sentiment. The other possible explanation would be that you simply disregarded my ideas, took up a tolerant attitude: the man seems to have gone a little out of his mind, and is talking all manner of strange things; nevertheless, occasionally he does have good ideas; that may be enough for the time being, eventually, we shall drift back to our spiritual home and this interregnum will pass over as a nightmare.

However that might be, no useful purpose will be served by pursuing the speculation whether it was personal loyalty or a tolerant attitude which kept the R.D.P. together. I am inclined to believe that the fundamental principles of Radicalism, as distinct from a camouflaged faith in Marxist and Communist orthodoxy, did find favour with a growing number of party members. But for one reason or another, they could not be sufficiently elaborated so as to be fully assimilated. The time has come for us to do so. Personally, I would let the ideas make themselves felt in the minds of those who, disillusioned by experience, are searching for a new faith, those who want to be Radicals. I wanted you to search your hearts and do your own thinking. I did not wish to force the issue on you, and stampede you to a decision. But I wanted the party to know its mind; to examine its intellectual heritage, either to reject it or to be proud of it. It seems that my last speech has served the purpose of a necessary provocation. Some party members who have been living in an atmosphere of spiritual falsehood and intellectual pusillanimity have received a jolt, which has placed the issues clearly before them. It is a parting of ways spiritually speaking. Let us have the moral courage and intelligent conviction to choose our respective ways. Thereafter, the future of the Radical Democratic Party will be clear.

Let me state the issue simply. It is a matter of fact. None can run away from his shadow. Our present is the result of our past. The Radical Democratic Party is there as the effect of a cause. Irrespective of myself, it was born out of a critical attitude towards Marxism. Criticism is neither rejection nor negation. All critics of Marxism are not necessarily anti-Marxist. Marxism is not a system of dogmas; it knows no final and absolute truth. Regarding experience as the only source of knowledge and truth, it is bound to adjust itself continuously to unforeseen events and changing circumstances. But every system of thought tends towards orthodoxy, which is a sign of stagnation. Constant criticism is the guarantee against that danger. Holding that thought is determined by being, Marxism admits not only the possibility, but necessity, of self-development. Therefore, I cannot rule out criticism. Indeed a critical Marxist is the conscience keeper of Marxism. Its own critical nature

guards the purity of Marxist thought. The Radical is a Marxist in this sense, not as a blind believer. He accepts the positive contributions of Marxism, in so far as they are not contradicted by subsequent social experience and scientific knowledge, and, inspired by the heretical and iconoclastic spirit of that precious heritage, proposes to elaborate, enlarge and enrich it. So, let there be no guilty conscience on account of our critical view of Marxism. We should be proud of our intellectual honesty as well as the effort to make some contribution to revolutionary theory and practice.

Our attitude towards Communism is equally critical; but our critique of Communism goes farther than that of Marxism. It is an error to identify the two. Marxism is a philosophy; Communism is only a political practice—the means to an end. Neither of them is an ideal. Nevertheless, while Marxism has become a religion for its uncritical adherents, Communism is regarded by its votaries as a utopia. As long as one could only imagine about it, any scepticism about it might be dismissed either as irrelevant or prejudiced. Now it is no longer a matter of imagination. If we are Marxists, our ideas must be influenced by experience. There is the experience of the Soviet Union, and the record of the Communist Parties in other countries. That experience compels scepticism. The political practice of the Communist Parties is neither intelligent nor honest. The history of the Soviet Union makes one doubt whether Communism will lead to the ideal of freedom. I shall have more to say about the utopia of Communism. For the moment, the point is that our disapproval of the communist practice is not new. The error was to identify it with Marxism. The confusion about our attitude towards Marxism resulted from that error. On the other hand, our critical acceptance of Marxism seems to have created the belief that there is such a thing as pure Communism distinct from Communist practice.

The review of the international situation made on behalf of the Central Secretariat of the party seems to have raised in the mind of some of you a number of questions: Are we abandoning Marxism? Are we turning against Communism? Are we taking up an anti-Soviet stand? Your conscience should be calmed by the preliminary observations about theoretical ques-

tions. Now let me turn to the international situation. Thereafter I shall revert to those questions again.

What is the purpose of our reviewing the international situation? Are we meeting here as a club just to discuss the subject? Are we behaving like passengers in a bus whiling away the time by discussing the news in the morning papers? Or are we studying the international situation with the purpose of writing history? I submit that we are reviewing the international situation with a particular purpose. The purpose with which every item on our agenda should be discussed has been made explicit by the serial order and the synopsis. It is quite possible that some of you hold an entirely different opinion of the international situation. They may read facts very differently. But as a party, we must have a common purpose. We are meeting here, as members of a party, to review the international situation with a common purpose. In a club or in a bus, or in a railway compartment, that common purpose would be absent, and we could have complete freedom to discuss in any way we like. A common purpose limits the scope of our discussion here. The purpose is quite clear from the synopsis. It is to appraise how things are in the world to-day, because we as a party shall have to operate in a part of that world. Since we met last, things have been changing, and we as Marxists must continually adjust our behaviour to the changing situation; we must not fit into the changing situation of the world imaginary facts of a preconceived world-pattern. At one time we review the world situation and coordinate expected facts and events into an ideal pattern which gives us a direction for our activities. At another time, we take stock of the situation again, and if we see that some of the actual facts do not fit into our ideal pattern, we should not quarrel with the facts, but reshape our pattern. It is a pattern not only of facts, but also an ideal-pattern. Because, we not only see events, but we try to understand what is the moving force of those events; why this particular set of events is taking place and not another. When world events move very fast, it becomes urgent for the people engaged in political practice to take stock of the situation more frequently, and change their ideal-pattern equally frequently if that appears to be indicated by the changing situation. Therefore, we cannot

say that, having founded the Radical Democratic Party in 1940 with an ideal and a set of ideas, we must unswervingly stick to them, completely disregarding what is actually happening in the world. To act like that might be according to Communist practice, but it would be a deviation from Marxism.

They talk learnedly about historical determinism. What is that? It means that political events do not take place at random; they are caused. But that is a tautology. How are events caused? Whatever may be the origin of thoughts or ideas, any event presupposes some thought, and thought in its turn is influenced by being. Experience determines our thoughts and ideas, and these set the pattern of historical events. We started with certain ideas about revolution, and revolutionary practice; since then we have had some experiences. In the light of those experiences, we shall have continually to test our faith and our dogmas. That is Marxism, as I understand it. For me, Marxism is as I understand it, not as Palme-Dutt or Dimitroff, or even as Comrade Stalin teaches it. And that is how I understand it. If somebody disagrees, not with rational argument, but on the strength of authority, I should refer him to the highest authority—to Comrade Marx himself. Meanwhile, I have as much right to say that I am right as you have to call yourself right and me wrong. Until you have the power to shoot me, you are not going to deprive me of the freedom of intelligence.

That much about the purpose of our discussion. The first purpose is to take stock of changing situations, so as to adapt our political practice to actual experience; the second purpose is to test our ideological presuppositions, our theory and our faith in the crucible of experience.

It is hardly necessary to deal with the various questions raised in course of the discussion. That would be rather difficult, and this talk would be very disjointed and incoherent. Because, not a few of the questions are irrelevant to the purposes of the discussion, having no relation to the actual facts of these situations. I am not talking simply to talk, or even to depict a factual picture of the international situation. I am trying to make ideas clear. Moreover, it would take a very long time if I were to make a detailed analysis. A brief review of the international

situation will serve the purpose. I shall, of course, take into consideration all the relevant questions raised and try to answer them.

In the first place, let me emphasise one point: We are not anti-Soviet. We remain as staunch defenders and friends of the Soviet Union as we have ever been. History has recorded that, when all its blind followers betrayed the Soviet Union, we alone stood loyally. We shall still stand by our loyalty. But we shall do so by our standards, and not by the standards of turn-coats and opportunists. So also about Communism. We are not anti-Communists. We are not going to carry on propaganda against Communism. But as I have already said, previously Communism was a utopia; if you do not like the word, let us say an ideal. An ideal, being an abstraction or imaginary, can never be subjected to a critical analysis. We have simply to believe in it, because nobody has seen it in operation. It is simply born out of the imagination of somebody, and we can only say that it is a very good imagination. Therefore, as long as Communism remained a utopia or an ideal, any critical attitude or scepticism was not possible; we could either accept or reject the ideal. We could pursue it or not. But once the ideal is achieved, it has come within the competence of critical analysis; we can look closer into it. If we find the ideal, cherished so far, not good enough, if we feel that we must have a greater ideal, Marxism does not preclude us from conceiving it, and doing so does not mean negation or denial of the ideal already achieved. Our understanding of Marxism will not prohibit critical examination of an attained ideal, and the setting up of higher ideals on the basis of that experience. Any other kind of Marxism would not be a philosophy of freedom and progress, but a warrant of death.

Now let me talk in a somewhat academic Marxist language in order to satisfy some of our comrades who fear that we are deviating from the faith. We can also cross swords in Marxist scholasticism. It is simple enough to quote scriptures. Marxism says that class antagonism has been the spring of all progress throughout history. Communism will establish a classless society. Thereupon, class antagonism will disappear. There is an obvious corollary to the assumption: with the disappearance

of class antagonism the spring of progress will dry out, and the wagon of history get stuck in the morass of a utopia. It is a utopia, because there is no reason to believe that history is heading towards the disappearance of humanity. That calamity may happen, but not in the course of dialectic development which is theoretically endless. But the utopia of Communism promises only death. In a classless society, dialectics will cease to operate; history will come to a standstill and humanity will die out. This brand of what is called orthodox Communism or Marxism does not open up a vista of unlimited progress and freedom. It tells us that on such and such a day the world is going to die. I do not believe in horoscopes, not even if it were cast by Marx himself.

What can we visualise beyond Communism? How do we propose to unfold the liberating potentialities of Marxism, not appreciated or even ignored by its orthodox adherents? In the latter part of my talk, I shall attempt answers to these crucial questions. Now let me turn to the international situation.

It is mentioned in the synopsis of the agenda that a polarisation of forces is the basic feature of the post-war international situation. We are not living in a void. We do not forget our past. Only people who commit mistakes try to forget their past. It so happens that we did not commit very glaring mistakes. Therefore, we are not ashamed of our past, and can always test our present by our past. In 1942, having analysed the international situation at that time, we came to the conclusion that there was a polarisation of forces. To-day we want to test that conclusion. Has the international situation developed as we anticipated in 1942? Even before 1942, in the middle of 1940, soon after the fall of France, I wrote an article with the caption "U.S.A. OR U.S.S.R." Since then we have repeatedly said that that was the choice for the contemporary world. In the course of our discussion, some comrades have suggested that the perspective of the present international situation can no longer be stated in that old term; that the facts of to-day cannot be fitted into our old pattern, which has become antiquated. I can see the force of that argument. It draws our attention to a parallel process of polarisation. But has the old process disappeared? It cannot be simply assumed that the new

proces of polarisation has eliminated the older process. That is not the case. While the parallel process of polarisation, which we perhaps did not see so clearly or indicate so explicitly in 1942, may have become clearer to-day, the process that we did anticipate then is still in operation, and I am going to show that the other process is only a logical corollary to it, which is much more pronounced to-day then ever before. I would also say that the parallel process, more evident now, was also anticipated by us, because it is a process of polarisation of ideas.

Let me refer you again to that prophetic article written in 1940. Therein the choice for Europe was stated in terms of time as well as of space; the choice was between yesterday and to-morrow. The U.S.A represented the world that was disappearing, and the U.S.S.R. a new rising world. Europe had to choose between the past and the future. Now the passing world had also an ideal, just as the new rising world has one. Therefore, the choice between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. implied also a choice between two sets of ideals. The polarisation of ideals which has become clearer to-day, was always there, underlying the polarisation of the economic, political and physical forces. Those who detected this more evident process could not ignore the underlying one. We did not. We said that only two great Powers would survive this war—the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. The rest of the world would gravitate round the one or the other of the two poles. Has that happened or not? I think it is hardly necessary for me to belabour the point. I do not think anybody will dispute it. Britain, whether democratic or imperialist, or socialist or even radical-democratic, can play only a minor role in the world of to-day. If she chose the radical democratic way, she might recover her position and be the leader of a new Europe. Notwithstanding all our quarrel with British imperialism and grievances against British democracy, we should not lose sight of that possibility.

The relation between Britain and the U.S.A., on the one hand, and Britain and the U.S.S.R., on the other, is more or less irrelevant for the purpose of our testing whether our anticipation of the development of the international situation, that is a polarisation of forces, has been borne out by facts or

not. Whether Britain goes with America or with the Soviet Union, is of subsidiary importance. We anticipated that she might tip the scale on the wrong side. It has been suggested that the Anglo-Soviet pact appears not to have operated as we anticipated. I shall come to that point presently. First let me pursue the major process of polarisation. While Britain is still trying to balance its position between the two poles, and Europe is still in a state of flux, in other parts of the world the process is going much farther. For instance, in China, the polarisation went so far that only about six months ago the country was on the verge of a civil war which would have immediately precipitated a clash between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. The Soviet Union cleverly got out of that fatal position by negotiating and signing a treaty with China. But after six months' time, it seems that it did not work, and China is again drifting dangerously towards the brink of a civil war, and it is very difficult to imagine how a war between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. will be avoided, in case there will be a full-fledged civil war in China.

This process of polarisation in Asia is creating a new home of Fascism. In 1942, when the Axis Powers were still going strong, and few in our country doubted their ultimate victory, the Lucknow Conference of our party declared that Fascism in Europe was going to be defeated in the field of battle, and although military defeat of Fascism might not mean its political and ideological extermination, yet, its spearhead broken, the disappearance of Fascism would only be a matter of time. At the same time, we said that in future we would have to fight Fascism on the home front. Now, a review of the situation in the Asiatic countries must drive us to the conclusion that, defeated in Europe, Fascism is still a living force in Asia, which may still become its new home. Evidently, the tactics and policy of our party will have to be adjusted to that conclusion, if it is warranted by facts, which is for you to judge. But we shall discuss that aspect of the international situation in greater detail when we come to discuss the Indian situation. India being a part of the world, events in other parts of the world are having their repercussions on the Indian situation. The political programme of our party will have to be framed directly on the basis of our appraisal of the Indian situation; but a

correct appraisal of the Indian situation is dependent on an objective analysis of the world situation. Because, whatever happens in India, happens in the context of world events. So, when discussing the Indian situation, we shall have to see how the world situation is likely to influence it. To-day we are discussing what is the essence of the international situation.

The policy of the British Labour Government in Greece, Spain, Germany, etc. etc., has been strongly criticised in course of the discussion. The trend of the criticism conveys the impression that the conflict in the present world situation is not really between the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. but between the latter and Britain. No doubt that there are conflicts between Britain and the Soviet Union, and it is not for us to defend every move of the British Labour Government's foreign policy. But our purpose is not simply to condone or condemn. We want to have a realistic view of the cross-currents of the international situation so as to make an objective judgement of its perspective. If it is true that the basic feature of the international situation is the Anglo-Soviet conflict, then the pattern of world events as anticipated by us in 1942 no longer holds good, and we shall have to take a different view of the world situation. But for an objective judgment, it would be entirely irrelevant to go on discussing all the newspaper reports about Greece, Spain, etc. etc., unless we first ascertain whether Britain has really become a decisive factor in world politics, and, instead of one process of polarisation, we have now a triangular conflict. Nobody will maintain that either the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R. has become a minor factor. An Anglo-Soviet conflict becoming the predominating factor of the international situation, eclipsing the earlier process of polarisation, is a hypothetical possibility. Britain may be disappearing as a dynamic imperialist Power, but the imperialist psychosis still persists, and consequently the policy of the British Labour Government may lead to a conflict with Russia before the latter clashes with the U.S.A. We shall have to examine that hypothetical possibility.

We are not apologists of the British Labour Party, or its Government or its policy. We have more than enough reason to be critical and even for condemning them; we have done so frequently, on various issues. But our business is not only to

quarrel with people or find fault with them. We want to understand the world situation. We are not irresponsible journalists. We observe the British or French or Russian politics with the object of finding out how it will affect the world situation, and how the world situation will affect India. We must find out not only facts, but also why those facts are happening. Therefore, when we examine the policies of various countries, we do not simply praise or condemn, support or oppose; we try to find out why a particular government is behaving in a particular manner. That procedure must be adopted by people who want to practise politics in a scientific, systematic and rational manner. How can we plan unless we can see beyond the tip of our nose? So, whatever has been said seemingly in praise of the British Labour Government's foreign policy was not an apologia: the purpose was to counteract the tendency on the part of some comrades to bend the stick in the other direction. That would give us a distorted picture and preclude a dispassionate judgement.

There is still another reason why we try to understand the foreign policy of the British Labour Government more closely and clearly than the foreign policy of Peru or Venezuela or even of the U.S.A. It is because we are vitally concerned with Britain. India is still a part of the British Empire. Fate is haunting us. A British Mission has come to make us free; but the negotiations seem to lead nowhere. Therefore, whatever happens to the British Empire, is a matter of life or death for us. Immediately, we have to be guided by that aspect of the international situation. Notwithstanding the fact that until now the British Mission has not made much progress, under the impact of the world situation Britain may still find some way to set India free, although that may not mean freedom for the Indian people. As the situation stands at present, it is through the intermediary of Britain that the world situation affects India. Therefore, we must, in the first place, try to understand Britain's position and policy. What the Soviet Government does or says does not affect us so immediately. It is very easy to write an article in the "Pravda", patting Dr. Soekarno on the back or calling Subhas Bose on one day a Fifth Columnist and the next day calling his I.N.A. a revolutionary force. Such things

happen in the irresponsible atmosphere of absolute power. Propagandists need not be scrupulous about facts which can be twisted to serve any purpose. Therefore, even if the all-powerful Stalin says that the Radical Democratic Party is right it will not affect us directly at all. But the slightest move of the British Labour Government has a direct bearing on the Indian situation, and therefore we have to be very careful in observing it. If we want to be critical and objective observers, we cannot begin with the prejudice that whatever the British Government says is wrong, firstly because it suffers from an imperialist psychosis, and secondly because it is a social democratic government. If we praise or criticise it, it is done objectively; it has to be done because it has the most direct bearing on India and our political practice in this country. If, appraising various acts of British foreign policy, we find it difficult to endorse a wholesale condemnation, that does not mean that we are apologists of the British Labour Government; nor does it mean that we are expecting it to come and give us something in return.

Since a good deal has been said about British policy in Greece and Spain and Germany, let me say a few words to make clear some points which might have been missed. As regards Greece, A.K. Mukherji wanted to draw your attention to a new set of facts, which should not be altogether unknown to you, because they had been brought to your notice even previously. I am afraid you did not attach great importance to them, because they did not fit into your preconceived idea about this government or that government. Having regard for the passion of our comrades to discuss the international situation, for sometime a weekly review of world affairs is being published in the 'Independent India'. It is not an expression of opinion, nor articles interpreting events and policies; it is a factual report of events coordinating them so that readers get an integrated picture of what is happening in the world. In course of that review, it was pointed out that the conflict in the Near East is no longer exclusively a conflict between British Imperialism and Russia. Previously, the politics of that part of the world was influenced by the conflict between British Imperialism and Russian Imperialism. For a time, after World War I and the

Russian Revolution, Russia disappeared from the scene as a great power. It has now staged a come-back, having recovered the status of a Great Power. But it is a Socialist Power, not an imperialist one. It is trying to promote revolution and help the liberation of colonial countries. But Britain, even with a Labour Government, remains an imperialist power, still playing the old game of keeping the Asiatic peoples in colonial slavery. There is a conflict between Britain, which is trying to retain her hold on the Near East, and Russia which is trying to liberate the peoples of those countries; consequently, the two are clashing. I am afraid that is interpreting facts to suit preconceived notions. Prejudiced against Britain and predisposed towards Russia, you are missing a new factor which has entered the scene. Once it is taken notice of, the simplified view that the politics of the Near East is dominated by a conflict between British Imperialism and the liberating mission of the Soviet Power, will be obviated.

The new factor is the U.S.A. established in Saudi Arabia. It is not yet known generally, but eventually it will be found out, that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company is no longer a British concern. Perhaps it is already an affiliate of the American Standard Oil. Otherwise, why should America be so particular about building the pipe-line through Mesopotamia? Why should the British be so anxious to transport oil to the Mediterranean and establish a naval base at Haifa? Why again, should the Americans be so eager to bring fuel within the reach of the British Navy.

The U.S.A. has appeared on the scene as a new factor in the Near East. Mukherjee wanted to draw your attention to this fact, suggesting that one could not have a balanced view of what happened in Greece if he did not take proper notice of this new factor. If a base for an eventual attack on the Soviet Union is really being created in the Near East, the inspiration and initiative are coming from America, not Britain. On the other hand, Soviet policy in Persia, the nerve-war against Turkey, actual claims on her territory, the support given to shady people in Kurdistan and Iraq who were associated with the fascist agent—Rashid Ali—these moves cannot simply be regarded as motivated with the pure purpose of liberating the

Near East from the clutches of British Imperialism. With such a high degree of credulity, one cannot get an objective view of the situation. The overriding fact is that there is a conflict of power-politics, and it is not a conflict between Russia and Britain alone. The U.S.A. is an active factor in it. We shall have to see which is the major factor---Britain or the U.S.A.

The obvious question would be: Why should America suddenly want to come there? Let us look for a satisfactory answer. Firstly, it is a fact that she is there; and secondly, she is doing certain things which cannot be ordinarily explained. So, the answer to the question will have to be found in a rational, convincing, interpretation of facts. The interpretation is obvious because the fact neatly fit into the pattern of polarisation of international forces anticipated by us. If Asia will be the new home of Fascism and, as the only remaining defender of the vanishing world, the U.S.A. will be the power behind the throne, it will be much to the latter's convenience and advantage to fight the eventual war against the U.S.S.R. in Asia. Europe still remains in a state of uncertainty. The danger of Soviet influence spreading further westwards is not yet eliminated. In any case, the possibility of an attack upon the Soviet Union proper is practically ruled out by the sufficiently thick wall of buffer States from the Baltic to the Adriatic. Moreover, the European peoples are much too exhausted and depleted to provide cannon fodder in sufficient quantities. To transport a large enough American army first to Europe and then across it will not be an easy job. It might meet the fate of Napoleon's Grand Army. In contrast, the position in Asia will be all very favourable. For all practical purposes, China is already under American control. Her supply of cannon fodder is almost inexhaustible. In addition, there will be India. With a National Government, this country will also gravitate towards the American pole. There will be plenty of supplies of all sorts. But it may not be possible to build up industries in the Asiatic countries quickly enough. It will be necessary for the U.S.A. to bring in modern armaments all the way from home. The Pacific is open to them, having practically become an American lake. But the Russians are also in the Pacific. They are in Korea and may come down as far as the Yellow Sea. So, the Pacific route

may not be altogether dependable. To that extent, the base in China will also be insecure. It would be risky to wage a war against the Soviet Union which will have the advantage of the internal line of communications. Other bases must be established. India is the obvious choice. But there also the crucial question of the line of transport and communications has to be solved. It was opened during war—across Africa and the Arab countries. America is establishing herself in those countries with a strategic purpose. Britain does not like it but cannot prevent it. Moreover, ostensibly, her interests are not threatened. But really they are, and she cannot help it. She is naturally trying to hang on by the skin of the teeth, as they say. But when the maturing clash will break out, she will be nowhere. In that case, in order to fight against the U.S.S.R., to defend the world against the menace of Bolshevism, the Americans will occupy all the Near Eastern countries bordering on the Soviet Union. India and China will be granted the more honourable status of allies. Assuming that the holy crusade will succeed, who will be there to get the victorious crusaders out of those countries? British Imperialism will also go with Bolshevism. Evidently, Britain and Soviet Russia are strange bed-fellows in adversity. The anti-fascist war brought them together in the strange position. They have reason to stick together for their common future. But at the same time they are irresistibly drawn in the whirlpool of power-politics, which often overpowers reason. However, the answer to the question why the U.S.A. should be interested in the Near East is clear: It is a part of the process of the polarisation of the world—the poles being the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Strategic considerations in anticipation of a war with the Soviet Union have made the U.S.A. interested in the Near East, particularly in its oil reserves. British efforts to retain a place in the sun—some hand in Persia, control of the Levant, creation of some new naval bases to counter-balance the imminent loss of Alexandria and possibly the Suez Canal—are aimed rather against American penetration than hostile moves against the Soviet Union. Had not America intervened where she had no legitimate business, Anglo-Soviet relations in the Near East might not have so degenerated. In any case, the Russians could try to understand British anxiety,

instead of raising the bogey of British Imperialism while the real danger is coming from a different direction.

Somebody argued that Britain still wants export trade ; how, then, can she be a country moving towards socialist economy? In a joint manifesto issued on May Day this year, the British Labour Party, the Trades Union Congress and the Cooperative Party declared that Britain must expand export trade because she needs food and raw materials. Now, you may have objection to the desire of the British Government to expand export trade; but can you object to the British people wanting food? God has placed them in a country where no more food grows than can feed them for three months in a year. Is it their fault? They did not choose their native land. Should we believe that, God having condemned them to three-quarter starvation for the whole life, it would be sinful for them to get their food from abroad ? What are they going to eat during the remaining nine months? They must import food for those nine months; and they shall have to export goods in payment. In the present state of the world, none would supply them food free of cost, not even the Socialist Soviet Union. And yet you would argue that Britain is imperialist because even under a Labour Government she wants to expand her export trade. Is that Marxism?

The policy of the British Labour Government to expand export trade and if possible, a protected market, is a necessity which grows out of the peculiar position of Britain. A protected market is desirable precisely because Britain's position as regards food supply is very precarious. Not even a sea-green incorruptible revolutionary government can trifle with the primary responsibility of feeding the people. If Britain went Communist, with Harry Pollit as chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, a thoroughgoing proletarian dictatorship with R. Palme-Dutt keeping watch on its theoretical orthodoxy, even then she would have to pursue the "imperialist" policy of expanding the export trade. If to do that is not permissible under Marxism, the sooner we throw away the three volumes of Capital into the bonfire, the better.

Even the Soviet Union, which has all the potentiality of being a self-sufficient country, could not do without export trade. Do

you know how it built up its export trade ? The effort led to the famine of 1926-28. In those days only agricultural products could be exported. Large quantities of wheat was spared for export by reducing bread rations almost to the starvation level. That had to be done because otherwise essential necessities could not be imported, agricultural machinery, for example. If it is permissible for the Soviet Union to have an export trade even by putting people to great hardships and privations, why should Britain be called imperialist for the same practice, even though she had to do so to get food for nine months in the year? Even in a socialist world, Britain would not produce enough wheat ; other countries would require industrial goods ; there would be mutual exchange. But we are still far from that utopia, living in a world where trade remains competitive. The Soviet Union also has entered the competitive world market. It is nothing worse than the impulse of self-preservation which compels Britain to seek export trade.

Let us think and talk like real Socialists. We are looking forward to an integrated world economy. Because of the peculiarities of the country, Britain grew as the workshop of the world. It is long since she has lost that monopolist position. Yet, even now she can manufacture goods required by other countries where those goods cannot be easily produced. What is the harm if Britain supplied those countries with manufactured articles in return for food and raw materials? Is it necessary to destroy the workshops of Britain in order to build them up again in other countries, so as to allow the workers of those countries the privilege of wading through the sea of blood and tears of early capitalist production? Why not let the British workers send you the things you need and you supply them in return the food they need, provided that it can be spared ? If such a mutually beneficial exchange is not possible between India and Britain, the latter will have to find other directions of export trade. Is it really so difficult to think in practical socialist terms? It seems that in reality there are not two psychoses: they are two facets of the self-same psychosis. The Communist psychosis is only an expression of the nationalist psychosis. I tell you, there is no Communism in the world today : Communism has become the most extreme form of

Nationalism. We have not destroyed Communism. The Communists have done that. It is idle to owe allegiance to a lost cause, a discredited ideal, an exploded dream. Let us be realists, and find new ideals.

As regards Greece, it will be a waste of time to quarrel about the exact composition of the E.A.M. in Greece, whether 20, 50 or 70 per cent of its membership was Communist. I only wanted to point out that, whatever policy the British Government pursued in Greece or elsewhere, was necessitated by the peculiar conditions of Britain, and no Government—Labour or Communist—can run away from its shadow. They must all be compelled to act according to the necessities of the British people; the island grows food only for three months a year—that is a stark fact.

To drive the point home, I may remind you of the not remote past. Again, I am not justifying British policy. Perhaps an alternative policy might be conceived. But things did happen. I am trying to explain why they happened as they did. It should not be foregotten that the British Army landed in Greece with the consent of Comrade Stalin. That is a historical fact. Nothing can change it. If the Russians are so very anxious to liberate Greece from the Fascists, they could have done it very easily. There was a powerful Russian army just on the other side of the border, in Bulgaria. General Scobie had only a few thousand men at his disposal. A large section of the Greek people might have risen in revolt. Why did not the Red Army march in and liberate the Greek people? If the crime against Greece is a crime of commission on the part of Bevin, it was a crime of omission on the part of Stalin. In neither case was it a crime. Both had to determine their respective policies in Greece in the context of their foreign policies as a whole. Neither could queer the pitch of a long-term policy in order to satisfy the clamourings of the leftist press in Britain; and the policy happened to be mutually agreed. Later on, there rose Anglo-Soviet conflicts on other issues. The Russians went back on the agreement about Greece and demanded evacuation of British troops. However, the fact remains that once upon a time there was an agreement on this issue, and subsequently that agreement was broken—not by the British, but by the Russians. Why? The change in the Russian attitude was

not motivated by any concern for Greek freedom. Otherwise, the earlier policy, agreeing to the landing of British troops, could not be explained. Greece was simply used as a pawn in the game of international power-politics. The Russians have set a new pattern of their foreign policy, which, on the face of it, looks very plausible. They think that there are two enemies : America and Britain; of the two, the one is down and out; it will be easier to deal with him; therefore let us dispose of him first, and then we shall have only one enemy left to fight. That sounds mere common sense—indeed, Napoleonic. But a little analysis will show that the Russians are badly miscalculating. Nobody can get out of his skin. Britain will have to live and exist. And if the Russians will make it difficult for her to exist, Britain will go over to America. The polarisation will be clear and complete. For the moment, Britain is oscillating between the two poles. The new pattern of Soviet foreign policy may drive her to America.

The question of British policy towards Spain was raised at the fag end of Shib Ray's speech. He tried to answer it in a rather off-hand manner. What he said might create a wrong impression. Let me say a few words to obviate that. The French Government, evidently under Communist pressure, demanded some international action against the Franco regime. The British Labour Government did not support the demand. Why ? One may ask a counter-question; What is the motive of the Communist-inspired French demand? Let us not speculate about motives of any party; but let us try to imagine the result of any action taken in pursuance of the demand. The result most probably would be war. Therefore one should understand why Britain could not support the French demand without the consent of America. She is not in a position to risk a war with the powerful trans-atlantic cousin. If the Communist-dominated French Government is so very eager to come to the aid of the Spanish Republicans, why does it not go ahead without waiting for Britain to act? With Soviet assistance, France can cope with Franco. But the war will spread. France is not prepared to take the risk. The French demand, therefore, is another instance of Communist irresponsibility.

In this connection, we should recollect that in the last civil

war in Spain, the Soviet Government also practised the policy of non-intervention just like the People's Front Government of Leon Blum and Chamberlain's Government in Britain. Again, it would be silly to talk of a betrayal of the revolution. At that time also the Soviet Government was not prepared to risk a war. There was no use of intervening unless it could be done effectively, and the Soviet Union in those days could not effectively intervene in Spain. Every ship would have to run the gauntlet of the Italian Navy in the Mediterranean or the German in the bottleneck between the Baltic and the North Seas; and that would have meant war. Since effective intervention was not a practical proposition, the Soviet Government preferred a policy which might at least minimise intervention in favour of counter-revolution. In the present situation also, the Soviet Government cannot adopt a different policy, unless it is prepared to risk immediately a war with Britain or America or both. Are we prepared to demand that the Soviet Union should immediately risk a war to help the Spanish Republicans against Franco? Evidently, we are not. If we cannot demand it from the Soviet Union, why should we demand it from the British Government or the French Government? If we can exonerate the Soviet Government of the failure to come to the help of the Spanish Republicans, why should we be so very exacting in the case of the British Labour Government? Why should we expect a social-democratic government to be more revolutionary than a communist government?

The misfortune of Spain, the continuation of the Franco regime, results from the peculiar combination of circumstances in Europe; it is no use laying all the blame at the door of Mr. Bevin. It is not Britain who is keeping Franco in power. In this connection also, America is the decisive factor. Because of her economically vulnerable position, Britain does not dare act alone—not even in alliance with France and Russia. In case of a war, in which America will be on the other side, Britain will be in the most exposed position. But why is America interested in keeping up the Franco regime? Why should we not exonerate her like Britain? For the simple reason that, if she wanted the overthrow of Franco, nothing could prevent it. Because, in that case, active intervention in

support of the Spanish Republicans would not involve any risk of war.

That is the negative reason which is the corollary to the positive reason. America wants to have a safe bridgehead on the European littoral of the Atlantic. The Iberian Peninsula is in every way the most suitable for that purpose. The whole of Europe is moving to the Left. If the final stage of the international civil war is to be fought on the European continent, troops and supplies from America must flow in across the Atlantic. Franco's Spain will provide the trans-atlantic crusaders with a hospitable landing place. The way to the Mediterranean and also to the Near East can be cut off by Spain if she joined the European leftward movement. America being so vitally interested in Franco's Spain, the British Labour Government, with all its undeniable sympathy for the Spanish Republicans must move warily. It would be foolish to risk a war with America just when her financial assistance is essential for Britain's economic recovery. Any act on the part of the British Government not palatable to America may be considered as an act of hostility, and the loan may not be sanctioned. For nine months, Britain must live on imported bread. Whoever lives in 10 Downing Street, be it Attlee or Pollit, must not forget that fact. For that, Britain needs the loan; for that, she needs export trade; for that, she needs naval bases. The self-same acts were being committed; the self-same facts are occurring; but in an entirely different context. To-day those acts are committed not by an imperialist government but by a government, moving towards Socialism. Therefore, it would be foolish to interpret the facts in the same way as if Chamberlain or Churchill was still the Prime Minister. The Communists take that absurd view, because they cannot think objectively. They say Bevin is a Social-Fascist, and that explains everything! Is that Marxism? Not to approach facts as they are, but with a preconceived notion? Under certain circumstances, export trade was the expression of British Imperialism; under all circumstances it is the expression of the hunger of the British people; and in a certain other context, it may be the expression of an effort to build up an integrated socialist world economy.

Somebody asked a question about Germany. That is really

a very complicated question, and has no direct bearing on the situation in India. All points on our agenda are inter-connected. We are discussing the international situation in order to come to a conclusion on the basis of which we shall consider the possibilities of the situation in India. While the situation in every country has some indirect bearing on the situation in any other country, for the moment, what is happening in Germany will not directly influence what happens in India. However, just a few words before passing on to the next point.

The conflict going on in Europe to-day is very largely what is called power-politics. Britain being in a position oscillating between the two poles, and haunted by the spectre of being reduced to a third rate Power, is trying to manoeuvre so as to occupy a place from where she may drive a fair bargain. There are moments when a weak third party can play the two main parties one against the other. Once upon a time, that was the position of Britain in Europe. Then she pursued the so-called balance-of-power policy. Situated in a similar position, it is quite natural for her to revert to the same policy, which was so effective in the past. On the other hand, the U.S.S.R., anticipating another war, is also trying to manoeuvre for positions. In this power-politics, for these immediate strategic considerations, ideological affinities and antagonisms, have been lost sight of. Our grievance is that the revolutionary side in this conflict should have allowed ideological convictions to be overwhelmed by other considerations. We should remember that it was Stalin who demanded subordination of ideology to other considerations. Trying to justify neutrality in the war against Fascism, he declared that to take up arms against an ideology was to wage a religious war, which belonged to the Middle Ages; to-day it is absurd to wage a religious war. We may not object against opportunism or power-politics, at the cost of ideological conviction, on moral grounds. We do not pretend to be anybody's conscience-keeper. Our objection to this doubtful "realism" is that it is prejudicing the cause of revolution.

Post-war Europe is in the position we anticipated at the time of the Lucknow Conference of our party. We visualised that after the war, Europe would be in a state of flux, different countries being in different social and political conditions; some

countries might still remain under Fascism, overt or covert; others, on the opposite extremity, might go fully socialist; in any case, the Soviet Union would be there; and in between, countries in different stages of advance towards democratic freedom and Socialism. Does not Europe to-day present exactly such a picture? There is Spain on the one end, and on the other, the Soviet Union. I do not want Spain to remain fascist to fit into our pattern, so that it will be flawless; but she is there, as a matter of fact. The various countries, with varying political and social institutions, make it impossible for the big Powers to have a united policy. Germany is divided into four zones, each occupied by one of the big Powers. There are all sorts of reports from each of those zones. We assume that the zone occupied by the Red Army must be experiencing a greater degree of freedom than the other zones. Perhaps that is true; the assumption may not altogether be unfounded. But the fact is that we know very little about it. So, while it is natural for us to assume that it is so in order to maintain our faith, is it also permissible for us to quarrel with others on assumptions which cannot yet be verified? There have been events which are ominous. Recently, Kingsley Martin, editor of the "New Statesman and Nation" was in Berlin; he personally has always been very friendly to the Soviet Union, although he is not a Communist, but a Liberal. His paper has always been pro-Russian. He visited Berlin and was found with a German Social-Democrat who accompanied him to certain parts of the city. Together with his German companion, he was arrested by the Russian police; he was released after some time, but not his companion. He protested and demanded the latter's release. He was advised firmly to get away even without knowing the whereabouts of the other man. Another instance is Michael Foot, Labour Member of the Parliament and a near-Communist. He is a greater friend of the Soviet Union than the whole C.P.G.B., because, whatever he writes is read by the entire British people, and taken seriously; whereas whatever is written in the "Daily Worker" is read only by a few thousand people at most, and nobody believes it. Recently, there has been much talk about Persia in the press; people thought there was something wrong. Foot went there to see for himself. A first-hand report by a

prominent journalist would influence public opinion. He went all the way to Teheran where he waited for four days for the permission to enter the province occupied by Russian troops. The permission could be obtained only from the Russian military authorities; it was not granted. A man who was bound to make a favourable report, if things were not very bad, came back naturally annoyed, and most probably with his confidence shaken.

When such facts are there, and similar facts are happening every day, it is rather difficult to take it for granted that some kind of paradise is being created in the countries occupied by the Red Army. All that can be explained on the plea of war emergencies. That is plausible. But is there really going to be another war? Who can fight against the Russians to-day? Can Britain, of all countries, fight against Russia? If the Communist Party of Great Britain has not been telling lies, the Russians should know that no government in Britain, whether Labour or Tory, could count upon the support of the people, if it declared war against the Soviet Union. The Communists say that even the army would revolt. That would not be the first instance of the British people preventing a war against the Soviet Union. It was popular protest which prevented Britain actively participating in the war of intervention in Russia immediately after the revolution.

Apart from popular sentiment, objectively, it is not a joke to fight against the Red Army to-day. British industries have been worn out under the strain of the speeded-up war production for several years; they must be completely overhauled before Britain's economic life can be rehabilitated; as it is, they cannot produce enough goods to supply the civilian needs of the country. With such a shattered industrial base, Britain cannot afford to undertake even a minor war. Whatever may be the desire of Mr. Bevin or Mr. Churchill, Britain simply is not in a position to fight Russia in the near future. It is also very doubtful whether immediately America could fight the Russians. The subjective factor is operating also there, although in a different way. Not that the Americans are revolutionaries; but the pampered doughboys want to go home to Main-Street, to eat ice-cream with their girls; they care neither for revolution nor

counter-revolution; they want to go home. And neither in China nor in India a sufficiently strong base has yet been created for a war against Russia. So, who can fight at present? And why create the bogey of war and excuse everything on that ground?

Either the Russians are mistaken, or they are suffering from a psychosis, or they are not capable of appreciating the revolutionary consequences of this war. Whatever happens in other parts of the world, this war has ploughed up Europe to such an extent that that continent can no longer be the base of counter-revolution. Once these circumstances are taken into account, fear of an early war against Russia appears to be entirely groundless. In such a situation, the Russians could well afford to be more liberal. Let them throw open the doors so that everybody can see what they are doing in Germany. If they are proceeding with socialist construction, let the world see it, applaud it and demand that the same thing should be done everywhere. That would be the most effective method of spreading revolution. Once it is demonstrated that the coming of the Red Army meant freedom for some countries, others will naturally be prepared to welcome liberation through that means, if it will not be available otherwise. I don't know what the Russians are doing in the countries occupied by the Red Army. In the absence of sufficient data, it would be foolish either to condemn or condone. But I must say that they are acting not very wisely.

Look at the situation in those countries from another point of view. Elections have taken place in several of them; in three of them, the Communist Parties have been miserably defeated,—in Austria, Hungary and to a large extent in Bulgaria. Perhaps Bevin did not allow free elections in Greece. But how to explain the defeat of the Communists in the other countries occupied by the Russians? Is that not a significant fact? It indicates that the reaction of the people in the Russian-occupied countries has not been as we expected and wished. We do not know the situation; therefore we withhold our judgment. But let us not rest our entire theory and practice on the basis of assumptions. We do not know all the facts; but we do know some, and the logical deductions from them must make us sceptical.

It is hardly necessary to go like this through country after country. A reference has been made to Tito's valiant anti-fascist fight as against the meagre contribution of liberal intellectuals. I will come later to that aspect of the international situation. Let me now summarise our discussion up to this point. On the assumption that Britain under a Labour Government is continuing the imperialist anti-Soviet policy leading to another war, some comrades suggested that the perspective of the international forces polarising as between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. should be revised. I have examined the facts mentioned by our revisionists. Now it is for you to judge whether a revision of our view is called for. I am not convinced by the arguments advanced for revision. What is necessary, as I said in the beginning, is to take notice also of the parallel process of polarisation. That would not be a revision of our view, because the parallel process was always there, as the more fundamental factor of the international situation. The ideological polarisation has become more evident to-day because the political polarisation has become sharper. In support of the suggestion for revision, some comrade brought in the question of international exchange. By itself, the question is very interesting. But it is obviously an overstatement to say that the fact of Russia supporting the gold standard proves that the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. are coming together against Britain who, even under a Labour Government, is preparing for a war to recover her position as an imperialist Power. The sneaking belief that "democratic" America is against British Imperialism, is yet another expression of the nationalist psychosis. The Russians supporting the gold standard is certainly an act of stupidity. Perhaps they believe it to be clever diplomacy to drive a cleavage between Britain and the U.S.A. The Russians recently have made other moves calculated to appease America. But it is all wishful thinking, or the Russians are living in the fools' paradise. They are obviously playing with the idea of finishing the British Empire first, and they will have their hands free to deal with America. The Americans occasionally pretend to play the game, their object being to frighten the British : Should the latter try to have an independent foreign policy, the Americans would play into the hands of the Russians. The threat has gone

home to the British, who have walked into the parlour of the Wall Street Shylocks. The Russians have also fallen for the trick. They have made several concessions to the Americans, particularly in China. The declaration to support the gold standard is that latest Russian concession to America. But these are all superficial events, which do not make history. If the U.S.S.R. is a Socialist state, the U.S.A. being the most powerful capitalist country, must be its principal enemy. None can call himself a Communist and yet expect the U.S.A. to ally with the U.S.S.R. in a crusade against the bogey of British Imperialism. To-day, British Imperialism is no more than a bogey. It is dead. Anyhow, what are the facts? Blood is thicker than water. When in the UNO the Persian issue came up, the Americans dropped their pretence of sitting on the line, and took the ring on the side of the British. You watch out for other events to see how the ground lay. The leadership of the anti-Soviet block naturally belongs to the U.S.A. If Britain would be driven to join that block, that would be, thanks to the shortsightedness of Soviet diplomacy.

Before I proceed to deal with the parallel process of ideological polarisation, which is really more important, and which will explain the conflict between Britain and the U.S.S.R., let me dispose of the bogey of the third world war. It has been a consolation for all the frustrated revolutionaries to look forward to another world war. After the first world war, no revolution in Europe succeeded; they hoped for the second world war to give them a new chance. I cannot comprehend this mentality, nor can I understand how people with such a mentality could call themselves revolutionaries. A war in our time means the hell let loose. For peoples or classes to be free, those who cannot free themselves by their own efforts, the world should go up in flames. That is a very perverse idea of freedom. The second world war came; we missed the opportunity again. Now we dream of yet another world war. That is behaving like vultures: Let there be more carcasses so that we may have more to eat! That is really what Communist ideals have come to be. Unfortunately, the third world war may come; but it will not bring freedom. It will bring the end of modern civilisation. Therefore, Marxists who can see beyond the

Heaven of proletarian dictatorship, who believe in human values, must not adjust their political practice to another world war; they must move heaven and earth to prevent the calamity. And my grievance against the Soviet Union is that although it is in a position to prevent that calamity, it is driving the world headlong towards that direction.

We have been quarrelling with the British Labour Party for not giving us freedom. I started the quarrel. It is really mean: they have betrayed us. But why does not Comrade Stalin behave a little better than the Social-Fascist Bevin? He could have done it. But he goes one step ahead and retraces five steps. Even to-day, if the Russians would talk about India just as they are doing about Greece, Spain, and so many other countries, and demand that the British Labour Government should hand over power to Indian Democracy, that would clarify the position immediately. What are they doing instead? They are plumping for the Congress, disregarding its fascist inclinations and damaging record during the war. British Imperialism must go; it is going; it is nearly gone; but will the position of the U.S.S.R. itself be improved if Fascism captures power in India? One may ask: What could the Russians do? Well, if they cannot help, they should at least desist from doing harm to the cause of Indian freedom; and they are exactly doing that out of the perverse desire to embarrass the British Labour Party. If they were actuated with a positive purpose, they could help Indian democracy.

The Russians, of course, receive false information from their henchmen in India and Britain. But they have other ways of knowing things. For instance, there is a representative of the Soviet News Agency in this country. He is fully acquainted with the programme and policy of the Radical Democratic Party. It is further reported that he believes that our point of view of the Indian situation is right. He must be making his reports. There are other channels through which information reaches the Russians. Why do not they publicly support the R.D.P. and demand that the British Labour Government should approach the Indian problem as suggested by us? One cannot but come to the conclusion that the Bolshevik liberators of the

world are opposed to democratic freedom for India; they prefer to favour Indian Fascism. They have, of course, their theories to justify this damnable political practice. Does not experience entitle us to doubt the correctness of that theory? And they call it Marxism! If Marxism favours Fascism as against democratic freedom in India, I would certainly discard Marxism of such a variety. Nor is it anti-imperialism. Don't be beguiled. A people's government advocated by the Radical Democratic Party as against a Fascist National Government would make a clean sweep of Imperialism; therefore, the latter would place Fascism in power. The Russian Bolsheviks and their henchmen in Britain and in this country also patronise Fascism.

Now, let me show what the Russians could do to help Indian democracy and hasten the downfall of Imperialism. A Russian demand that the Indian problem should be solved as the R.D.P. has proposed would immediately cause a realignment of forces in the political life of the country. It is a wide-spread belief in the nationalist camp that a subject nation cannot be free except with the assistance of a foreign Power. Until recently, the hope was pinned on Germany and Japan. They having been eliminated, all eyes are now turned towards the Soviet Union. The Communist Party is looked upon as the powerful arm of Stalin reaching out to India. The Communist Party exploits that fiction for keeping a large mass of left nationalists away from rational, far-sighted, revolutionary politics. Once Comrade Stalin would disown his bastards, who have been functioning as the storm-troopers of Indian Fascism, and publicly demand a democratic approach to the question of Indian freedom, (we do not want any other help from him), the educated middle class would rally round the Radical Democratic Party. Consequently, it will before long become a powerful factor in the political life of the country and the British Labour Government would be compelled to listen to its suggestions. Why don't the Russians take this democratic anti-imperialist view, the only honourable attitude for an honest and intelligent Marxist to take under the given circumstances? There are two reasons. One is the nationalist degeneration of Communist politics; degeneration of Communism itself; the second is short-

sighted power-politics which, in its turn, results from the fact that the Soviet State has become a national State.

The power-politics practised by the Russians may indeed prove to be suicidal. I have already pointed out the dangerous possibility of India under a Fascist National Government becoming a base for the future war against the Soviet Union. The erroneous policy of supporting colonial nationalism, irrespective of its social background and outlook, has produced an extremely harmful result in China, which has already been converted into a base of American Imperialism preparing for a war against the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the Russians are still pursuing the suicidal policy in the Near East. What is happening, for instance, in Persia, may lead to the establishment of a small buffer State—Kurdistan or Azerbeidjan may come under Soviet influence, or even be incorporated in the Soviet Union. But at the same time, the entire Arab world is going over to the other side and not to British Imperialism, but gravitating towards the opposite pole. The immediate repercussion of the power-politics of the Soviet Government in Azerbeidjan has helped America to gain a strong foothold in the Near East as the protector of the whole Arab world. The old Stalinist strategy of backing up Pan-Islamism as an anti-imperialist force has failed. Instead of being attracted to the Soviet Union, the Muslim world has gone over to the other side. The Russians have realised that the policy has defeated its own purpose; that instead of winning the sympathy and support of the Muslim world, the latter has gone against them. That sentiment is having its repercussions in India also. Therefore, all of a sudden, the Communist Party of India has discovered that Pakistan is an absurdity. The high-priest of the Indo-British Communist Church, Palme Dutt, himself has expounded this new theory. Instead of these devious political manoeuvres and theoretical sophistications, the Russians could have handled the Persian issue in a straightforward manner. To bamboozle a weak government is not the right and effective means to detach it from reactionary international influences. By seizing monopolist control of the oil fields of North Persia, with the ostensible object of keeping Anglo-American concession-hunters away, the Soviet Government acted according to the pattern of the Tzarist foreign policy. It

has gone back on the early Leninist tradition of the Revolution, which abandoned all the privileges acquired under the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907 about Persia. Deviating from the revolutionary tradition which raised their moral status, the Russians are bound to lose in Persia also.

While discussing the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, let me draw your attention to a number of facts which will enable us to pass on to a re-examination of our perspective of Red Napoleonism. The Soviet Government has seized oil concessions in Persia. Egypt proposes to build a dam across the Nile : It is a huge industrial project. Capitalist firms from various countries are bidding for the contract. Four tenders have been submitted from Russia. Such constructions usually serve the purpose of exporting capital. Is export of capital consistent with Socialist economy ? That is one set of facts which must cause misgivings.

Here is another set. In the first Foreign Ministers' Conference, the Soviet delegate demanded the trusteeship of Tripolitania. The progress of the conference was held up on this issue. For once the social-fascist Bevin proved to be much too clever for the Machiavellian Molotov. He opposed the idea of trusteeship, and advocated complete independence for all the Italian colonies in North Africa. There was a sigh for the gods; the great champion of freedom for colonial peoples opposed Bevin's proposal. As an alternative to his original demand, the Soviet delegate proposed that Italy should hold the trusteeship of her former colonies. At that time, there was hope that the Communists would come to power in Italy.

Finally, there was the Soviet demand for naval bases on the African coast of the Red Sea and the southern littoral of the Mediterranean. That demand has also been withdrawn after weeks of haggling and mud-slinging in international conferences. The acquisition of naval bases far away from home, on foreign territories, is reminiscent of the days of imperialist expansion. How could it be a part of the foreign policy of a Socialist State? This certainly is a perplexing question. Naval bases, far off from home, do not serve any defensive purposes. Because, in the time of war, they can be cut off and rendered useless. They are established as the outposts of powers with aggressive designs.

The fact that the demand was withdrawn shows that it was not seriously made. Why, then, was it made at all? Evidently, as a bargaining counter in the game of power-politics. However the demand for sharing with Turkey the control of the Dardanelles still stands. It can have a defensive purpose; nevertheless, it means encroachment on the territorial sovereignty of Turkey. It is hardly possible that the demand will be enforced without the risk of a war, and Turkey will be in the other camp, with the sympathy of the entire Moslem world. The defensive purpose of the Soviet Union could be served by international control of the Straits.

While engaged in this suicidal power-politics, which is isolating the Soviet Union, the Russians are invariably backing up the wrong horse in the colonial countries, which will thus become the new homes of Fascism, and therefore no friends of Soviet Russia. If the British troops quitted Java, handing over the country to Soekarno, what would have happened to that country? If instead of reinstalling the former Governor of Burma, the British had handed over power to Aung Sang, what would have happened to the Burmese? The record of both these anti-imperialist heroes leaves no room for any doubt on that score. Both the countries would be handed over to people who acted as Japanese agents during the war. So, everywhere, the Russians, in spite of their Marxism and Communism, are playing into the hands of Fascism. I don't say that it is a deliberate policy; it is stupidity.

What shall we conclude from these facts? Wherever they can do anything, they do the wrong thing; where they cannot do any thing practically, they back the wrong horse theoretically. There must be some logic in this continuous bungling. The object of our discussing the international situation is to grasp the implication of these bewildering facts. We must discover the red thread running through them all.

It is not sheer perversity, but thanks to our Marxist training that we have reached the conclusion that revolution can no longer take place under the banner of Communism, and that Marxism as vulgarised by its orthodox exponents can no longer give us strong enough inspiration. We shall have to set up higher ideals and find a nobler philosophy of life. Unprincipled power-politics inevit-

ably results from the pragmatic view of history, the view that the end justifies means. A relativist ethics raises selfishness to the status of revolutionary urge. The world has made certain experiences; we must draw the lessons from them, and having drawn the lessons, we must have the courage to act accordingly. If that is not permissible for revolutionaries, then we shall have reached another conclusion: revolution is not possible. Experience has proved that under the discredited flag of Communism, revolution can advance no further. We must raise a more inspiring banner. You apprehend that by getting out of the beaten track, even when it has turned out to be a blind-alley, we shall be unpopular. In that case, every intelligent and honest revolutionary cannot but be unpopular; the same fate will overtake the cause of revolution itself. Is it, then, a lost cause? Should the world be left to stew in its own juice? These are the questions which emerge out of our discussion. We must face them boldly. If we still believe that the world needs a revolution, then we must blaze a new trail, inspired by a new philosophy of revolution, and prepared for political practice suitable for the circumstances.

After the French Revolution, Europe was unsettled by the Napoleonic war. Feudal power was undermined, and in course of time a new *status quo* was established. Contemporary Europe will most probably make a similar experience. The Fascist powers have been defeated; some parts of liberated Europe will go further towards a new social order; in others, the progress may be slow; in some countries, there may be a positive reaction. But Europe as a whole will settle down to a new *status quo* of uneven development. A whole continent cannot be expected to march together abreast; nor has history ever experienced an uninterrupted period of revolution. Every revolution establishes a new *status quo*. Every revolution creates vested interests. That is a lesson of history. The Russian Revolution cannot be the exception. It has also created a new *status quo*. That is not to be condemned as reaction. That is how all revolutions end. Otherwise, after a revolution, human history would come to an end. Within the limits of the new *status quo* established by the Russian Revolution, a new stage of human development will take place. Thereafter, a new revolution will be

necessary. That is dialectics of history. Other countries will have to experience the revolution which has established a new *status quo* in Russia. But neither the pattern of the revolution nor that of the post-revolutionary *status quo* can be transplanted in other countries. Once a revolution establishes a new *status quo*, the period of that particular type of revolution comes to an end.

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Just as in Russia there could be a semi-proletarian revolution, partially skipping over and partially fulfilling the bourgeois democratic revolution, similarly other countries may skip over the peculiar type of revolution which took place in Russia. Their revolutions will have different patterns. In other words, the period of revolution of the Russian model has come to an end. We may even say that an epoch of history opened up by the Russian Revolution has been closed upon the defeat of Fascism. The Red Army has played its historical role by bringing about the defeat. Now Europe will recover from the post-war unsettlement, in its own way which will also not be one and uniform. That variegated process of recovery opens up a new period of revolution. It may not be as spectacular as the Ten Days that shook the world thirty years ago. It will be a revolution none the less, and will be a greater revolution, because it will establish a new *status quo* on a higher social and cultural level. That is why Lenin used to say that upon the spread of revolution to Western Europe, Russia would be a back-number.

I don't say anything worse than what Lenin used to say. That is not an anti-Soviet attitude. Of course, I refuse to take up a religious attitude towards the Soviet Union. A new *status quo* has been created there. Human development will have to go beyond that stage. It would be absurd to maintain that this is the end of its journey. It would be equally absurd to maintain that human genius cannot possibly create different types of social order. To say that the future of mankind must be cast in one uniform pattern, is to set a rigid limit to human creativeness. I am not prepared to believe that the ideal society has been established in Russia, and the rest of the world can do nothing but imitate it slavishly. That belief breeds the spirit of conservatism which, in course of time, imperceptibly becomes reaction. Those who say that to criticise Communism or to

have any misgiving about the evolution of the Soviet Union is a deviation from the loyalty to the cause of revolution, should themselves be warned against the danger of becoming conservative and reactionaries.

Like the Russian Revolution, the French Revolution also became a back-number in course of time. But it was not a failure any more than the Russian Revolution is a failure. The French Revolution was a success. It accomplished its task. But world history did not stop there. The Russian Revolution followed the French Revolution. Similarly, an Indian Revolution will follow the Russian Revolution; and why should we assume that the Indian Revolution will be on the pattern of the Russian Revolution? The ideological, theoretical and practical pattern of revolutions which are still to take place must be influenced by the experience of the world since the Russian Revolution. By reviewing the world situation, we come to the conclusion that they will not take place according to the patterns of the Russian Revolution. By making a dogma out of those patterns, we shall only obstruct revolutions which are still to take place. We cannot say that we are fighters for freedom, if we are incapable of freeing ourselves from a dogma. We cannot fight for freedom if our own spirit is not free; even if the chains are manufactured in Moscow, they will be no less galling and obstructive than the chains made in England or in India.

Iconoclasm is the fundamental spirit of revolution. But iconoclasts themselves often set up new icons. The iconoclasts who went ahead of us destroyed old icons, but have set up new ones. Since they are the high-priests of the new temple, they do not want that their icons should be destroyed. But if we want to follow their footsteps and act as revolutionaries, we shall have to pull down the new icons. As revolutionaries, we claim the right to tear down their icons just as they had to tear down older icons. That is the path of revolution, which we must travel in quest of freedom. If your ideal is not freedom, but proletarian dictatorship or a closed system of Communism, then we must part company, for you to lag behind, and others to march forward towards unexplored regions.

Comrades, in my yesterday's speech I did not say anything more than that. If that iconoclasm is not the fundamental

principle of Radicalism and of our politics, then, I do not think that our politics differs from that of any other party, and it is not scientific. If that is not the case, we have no right to exist, and I shall say again, let us part company. Those with a simple nationalist psychosis may go to their spiritual home, and those with the more extreme nationalist psychosis may go to the Communist Party.

Yesterday, I thought that it would be necessary to divide this talk in two parts, the first dealing with the facts of the situation, and the second setting forth the conclusions regarding our ideological and theoretical equipment to be drawn from those facts. Towards the end of yesterday's talk, I felt that very little remained to be said. What I wanted to say regarding the ideological and theoretical presuppositions of revolutionary political practice, was outlined in course of the speech yesterday. Nevertheless, having said that I would continue the talk to-day, I must do so. But in the beginning, I must tell you that there will be nothing new. As a matter of fact, there may be some boring repetitions. I shall try to summarise the theoretical deductions which must be made from our review of the international situation. That, I believe, is the purpose with which we have been discussing the international situation for the last two days.

It is necessary to re-examine our ideals and our theoretical postulates and presuppositions from time to time, in order to prevent that we run after wrong ideals, and in order to guarantee that we may be able to continue our advance towards the goal of freedom.

I began my talk yesterday with the statement that, as far as I am concerned, the ideal is neither Communism nor Social-Democracy nor simple democracy nor again a classless society; it is freedom. We are supposed to be committed to a materialist philosophy. Materialism is antithetical to Idealism. How, then, can we have an ideal? Am I not deviating from our philosophy when I talk of an ideal? Some comrades raised the question insinuatingly. One frankly disparaged vague notions like freedom. I don't know what is the concrete purpose of his political practice. I thought that Communism was not our end but a means to the end, the end being freedom. Perhaps we shall never attain perfect freedom; ideals are never reached; but they

inspire incessant strivings towards them. Freedom is not an empty concept; nor is it a vague ideal. It is the choice for action. The greater the latitude of choice, the nearer we come to freedom. Therefore I cannot conceive of a nobler view of life than the old principle that man is the measure of everything. That social order is nearer to the goal of freedom which allows the individual the largest measure of choice.

I believe that the degeneration of Communist theory and practice, about which we talked yesterday, results from one single fact, and that is the failure to understand the supreme importance which is given to ideas in Marxism. Materialist philosophy does not exclude ideas, and the potentiality of ideas. As a matter of fact, ideas are the urge for all human activity, and all human progress. Materialism traces the origin of ideas to the physical being of man. They are not revealed; nor do they exist independently of our physical existence. But Materialism does not say that ideas have no more than a subsidiary place in the history of human progress. On the contrary, every great social or political movement was heralded by new ideas, which operated as the motive force of the movement. When these ideas exhaust all their possibilities and can no longer move men to great and heroic actions, the period of social and political development heralded by them comes to an end, and humanity begins to look out for newer ideas, new inspirations, new ideals, a new faith, in order to begin a new surge ahead. The over-emphasis laid on the class character of ideas, the mechanical term "super structure", compelled Marxists to overlook the very fundamental principle of philosophy. Consequently, Marxism ceased to be a philosophy and became only a mere political practice; and political practice or a theory of political action or social revolution without a philosophical basis is bound to degenerate into pragmatism. As a matter of fact, some people in our country talk about Marxism as a technique of revolution!

Now, if Marxism, or the theory and ideology of the revolution of our time, is a creation of the proletariat, then we cannot explain how these ideas were formulated by Karl Marx at a time when the proletariat was still in its infancy. You will similarly see that the ideas and theories of the bourgeois revolution

were developed by men long before the bourgeois revolution, long before the bourgeoisie had become a dominant social force. The ideologists of the bourgeois revolution lived in the atmosphere of feudal society, and themselves belonged to the feudal society. Many of them, subjectively, never broke away from the tradition of feudal culture. A man like Voltaire, for instance, subjectively was a reactionary. Then there is Balzac, a man whose contribution to the history of revolutionary thought is considerable; subjectively, he was a defender of feudal society, aristocratic culture and mediaeval traditions. Yet, nobody has done more to undermine the moral foundation of feudalism. Marx did not go to Moscow to learn his philosophy. He learned his philosophy from Hegel, who is said to be the philosopher of Fascism. How is it that the same Hegel gave birth to Marxism and also to the philosophy of Fascism? In order to understand the historical significance of these facts (there are many more), we shall have to abandon the dogma that ideas are mere super-structure built on established social relations. As against the dogma, the fact is that the so-called bourgeois ideology developed before the establishment of the bourgeois society; the so-called proletarian ideology (Marxism) also preceded the rise of the proletariat. I use the adjective "so-called" because there is no such thing as bourgeois ideology or proletarian philosophy. Ideas are the common heritage of mankind. The idea and ideal of a new social order have to be conceived first; then, efforts for building it can begin. You cannot build a house without having an idea in your head. What sort of house do you want to build? A house requires a material foundation composed of bricks and stones and mortar, and it also requires an ideal picture in the brain of the architect. And that brain does not follow the foundation of the house. The brain of the architect precedes the house, just as Voltaire and Balzac preceded bourgeois society, and Karl Marx lived a hundred years before the age of proletarian revolution. Therefore, it is wrong to say that ideas and ideals have no place in Materialism. If that was true, then Materialism could not claim to be a philosophy. If Marxism was devoid of ideas, and spurned ideals, then, it could not inspire efforts for the building up of a new social order.

I made those few general observations by way of reminding

you of the purpose of this discussion. It is not simply a debate, skilfully to score points. The review of the international political situation was to lead us to an examination of experience made by men moved by certain ideas and ideals, and then to judge if those ideas and ideals are still compelling enough to take us further. We have examined the facts. We have reviewed the experiences made. Now we are in a position to judge whether the ideals of Marxism and Communism, as we understood them hitherto, can still serve as the incentive for action in a complicated situation.

Before proceeding further, I want to emphasise that our discussion here has only one purpose: to clarify our own minds. We have critically examined Communist theories and practice, and the foreign policy of the Soviet Union as well as its internal conditions, with the sole purpose of deriving lessons for our own guidance. We shall have to act according to those lessons. We do not propose to carry on anti-Communist or anti-Soviet propaganda. That is not our business. If we were anti-Communist or anti-Soviet, we should have the courage of our conviction, and say so publicly. But we are not. We had to clarify our own ideas, so that we can see clearly ahead of us and our action is more effective. You need not be oppressed by the apprehension that now we are committed to criticise Communism and the Soviet Union. That is not our task, although some of us individually have more reason to be bitter against Communists or Soviet Russia than most anti-Communist crusaders or Soviet-baiters. If we allowed ourselves to be moved by subjective considerations, we could have said many things long ago. But we have all along taken a tolerant attitude. To criticise is not to condemn. We are neither bitter nor vindictive. We are not quarrelling with people for the sake of quarrelling. Some of you seem to be staggered at the very suggestion that there is little freedom in the Soviet Union. I have no first-hand knowledge of conditions there to-day, although one can form a pretty fair judgment from information available. It is not very reasonable to say that whoever does not praise the Russians unreservedly is a liar.

I have had some personal experience, and it was not a pleasant experience. I had more than enough reason to be bitter.

You don't know that. Perhaps you will never know. If the Russians could have their revolutionary way, I might not be here today. No, they did not want to kill me in a straightforward manner by putting a bullet through my head. They simply dropped me when I was seriously ill. That was the price Stalin paid to secure the control of the Communist International. And you might not believe me when I say that I thought he was right in doing so. The point is that gross injustice done to me personally did not influence my objective judgment. On my return to this country, you know, I was sentenced to 12 years transportation. Shortly after my conviction, a high Police officer, who was in charge of the Meerut Communist case, visited me in Bareilly Jail. Beating about the bush for a while, he came to the object of the visit. He thought that I must be bitter against the Russians, and wanted to exploit my feeling. The central theme of the conversation was: "The Russians have treated you very shabbily." After two hours' talk, he said in exasperation: "You are hopeless; you are a bit of a philosopher. How can you still stand by those people after the way they have treated you?" I told him that I did not stand by anybody; I stood by my ideal. Before leaving, he said: "Whatever happens, there is no future for Communism in this country." I asked, why? He said: "I have been dealing with your disciples for a long time; I know each of them inside out. If they had a fraction of your integrity, then Communism might have a chance in this country. I tell you there is none." You can easily imagine the point of this story. If I allowed the sense of personal injury to get the better of my loyalty, I would have been rewarded like Judas. But twelve years in prison could not terrify me to stoop so low.

I could give many more instances to convince you that even the greatest personal injuries have never influenced me, and will never influence me. My present critical attitude to-day is determined also by the loyalty to the cause of freedom. The origin of my present attitude may be traced to the last sentence of my last letter to Stalin, written from Berlin on the eve of my departure for India. I wrote that I could not reconcile myself to the idea that the catalogue of revolutionary virtues did not include truthfulness, honesty and loyalty. I have not become,

a moralist only to-day to cover my deviation from the path of revolution.

There are one or two points of fact which were not covered yesterday. I must say a few words about them. Talking about the Anglo-Soviet Treaty, some comrades said that we had hoped that it would save the world. Our appreciation of the historical importance of the Treaty was neither a matter of hope nor expectation. It was a thesis. We said that Europe could be reconstructed according to the spirit of our time if the Anglo-Soviet Treaty became the axis of post-war politics. Given the fact that the parties concerned in this Treaty were both committed to the self-same ideal, conceived differently according to their traditions and other preconceived notions, it was quite legitimate to expect that immediate difficulties would be overcome and the Treaty would be the axis of European politics. And that alone might have avoided the dreaded third world war. That might have further accelerated the process of polarisation between the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., and thoroughly democratised and revolutionised Europe. A close alliance between the Soviet Republic and Britain moving towards Socialism would have liberated not only Europe, but perhaps also the entire Asiatic and African continents from the influence of the U.S.A.; the latter might have been isolated and left to stew in its own juice, and would have had very little possibility of undertaking a war against the U.S.S.R. That would be the development of post-war Europe towards Radical Democracy. Therefore we came to the conclusion that only the triumph of Radical Democracy could prevent a third world war. And to-day I say, if a third world war cannot be prevented, there is no hope: civilisation is going to break down.

What is the corollary to that conclusion? The triumph of Radical Democracy is the only hope of the world. Neither Communism nor the old-fashioned democracy can save it. Radical Democracy alone can save the world; therefore, the new faith of revolutionaries, the new hope of mankind must be found in the philosophy of Radicalism. To rescue Marxism from the rut of orthodoxy---call it revision, if you please, words don't frighten me---has become a historical necessity. Realisation of the necessity sets us free; and only spiritually free men

can lead the struggle for human freedom.

Now I shall deal with a fact which seems to be troubling you all. Estrangement between the Soviet Union and Britain under the Labour Government has of late been the outstanding feature of international relations. It has nearly eclipsed the polarisation of the world between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. That is a very disturbing development and must attract the attention of all intelligent revolutionaries. Until now all explanation of Anglo-Soviet distrust has been psychological: the Russians are still labouring under their fear complex. But that is hardly a satisfactory explanation. The exploits of the Red Army must have given the Russians a sense of immense power. That should dissipate the fear complex.

What then is the real cause of this Anglo-Soviet estrangement? I tried to explain it yesterday; it is power-politics, practised on both sides. But it is not the old-time power-politics. Until the first decade of this century, there was a conflict between Tzarist Russia and British Imperialism. It dominated Asiatic as well as European politics for many years. That old conflict seems to have been revived, notwithstanding the fact that both the countries now have different political regimes, and have concluded a treaty for twenty years. Is history, then, repeating itself? No. The background of this new power politics is an ideological conflict. Shib Ray drew our attention to this parallel process of polarisation. The new polarisation is not the third arm of a triangle. It does not give us the picture of a triangular fight between Britain, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. The old polarisation is still going on; it may for the moment appear to be overshadowed by the Anglo-Soviet conflict; but still it remains the basic factor. I for myself believe that before long the confusion will be cleared, and international relations will be seen in their true perspective. Meanwhile, a new conflict has arisen. It is no longer a conflict between Communism and Fascism, or Communism and Democracy. It is a conflict between dictatorial Communism and a resurgent idea of democracy. Therefore, Shib Ray was not very wide of the mark when he said that the outstanding feature of contemporary international relations was conflict between Communism and Radical Democracy. Perhaps it is an over-

statement to say that Radical Democracy is represented by the British Labour Government. Nevertheless, historically speaking, the statement contains a very large grain of truth. However may be the position to-day, we should see which way events are moving. Who will ultimately lead resurgent Democracy, still remains uncertain. But one thing may be taken for certain; the British Labour Government must move towards Radical Democracy, if Britain was not doomed to setback. Since we believe that the future belongs to Radical Democracy, we expect that, wherever dictatorship is not yet in the saddle, events will move to that direction.

The old polarisation between resurgent Fascism and decadent Communism will lead to a third world war which would ruin the world. Parallel to that fatal process of polarisation, a new process of ideological polarisation is developing. The third factor is not decadent British Imperialism, but a Britain which has launched upon the new way of revolution. We must fix our eyes on that rising star, because Communism no longer offers any hope. For the moment, it may reasonably be expected that British Labour in power will assume the leadership of Radical Democracy. If it fails, the leadership will come from other quarters, out of the excruciating experience of the European peoples, rejecting, on the one hand, the line of dictatorial Communism and, on the other, conventional notions of ineffective and outmoded Social-Democracy. The philosophy of the new political practice has still to be formulated. Otherwise there will be no clear perspective before civilised humanity, which is groping in the dark today. Unless there is a new hope and a new faith, tormented and frustrated peoples will be divided between the lures of Fascism and decadent Communism. The result will be a terrific clash between the two poles of the world, and civilised humanity will go down in that clash.

The selfishness of nationalism prevented India from taking an active part in the world-wide efforts, which brought about the defeat of Fascism. At the same time, imperialist foolishness did not allow Indian anti-fascists to do what they could have done by way of contributing to the defeat of the Axis powers, and also to arrest the rise of Fascism in the country. The misfortune may turn out to have been a blessing in disguise.

Compelled to remain out of the fray, we had the opportunity of carefully observing the cross-currents and under-currents of world events, and dispassionately draw conclusions from the excruciating experience of the civilised world. Consequently we may be in the position to make a considerable contribution to the formulation of a new philosophy of life, which seems to be the crying need of our time. Let me repeat that it is not going to be a really new philosophy. What is necessary is to examine current ideas and cherished ideals in the light of new experience, and to revise and restate them to suit the requirements of a changed situation. That requires a good deal of thinking. The credit of having elaborated the idea of radical democracy belongs to us. We have suggested that formal parliamentary democracy and dictatorship are not the only alternatives for the future. Our theoretical propositions about a really democratic political practice and the structure of a new type of democratic State are being corroborated by actual political practice compelled by experience in a number of other countries. The new way of revolution visualised by us four years ago has been opened up by the experience of more than one people. We could not contribute much to the military defeat of Fascism; but we have elaborated ideas which are bound to influence the post-war reconstruction of the world. That is a strong enough incentive for us to clarify and crystallise those ideas still further, and to put our cherished ideals in the new perspective of a changed situation.

It appears that Europe is being polarised between western Democracy and Russian Communism. Two abstractions are posed as thesis and anti-thesis. Neither the one nor the other of the two factors supposed to be in conflict really exists. The so-called Russian Communism is very different from the ideal of Communism. It is something concrete, and that concrete thing does not fit in with the abstract ideal of Communism. The Soviet Union may still be called Socialist Republic, but in reality it is a national State. The internal structure of that National State may be socialist or communist, nevertheless, it is a National State. Operating from the basis of a National State, Communism can no longer be an international force. A National State cannot disregard considerations of its defence and security. Power-politics becomes unavoidable. It is

perfectly right for the Soviet Government to determine all its policies by the considerations of defence and security. Defence means self-preservation, which is the most elementary human impulse. But it cannot be simply taken for granted that the very existence of the Soviet Union, its efforts to exist as a National State, constitutes an urge for revolution in other parts of the world. It does not. That explains many strange moves of Soviet foreign policy, to which I have drawn your attention. As a National State, the Soviet Union frequently is compelled to act in a manner which does harm to the cause of revolution. Its primary concern is not to spread Communism, but to extend the influence of the Soviet State. The revolution has created a vested interest, which must be defended. Whatever may be the conditions inside the Soviet Union, Communist Parties abroad have become instruments of the foreign policy of the Soviet National State. Communism everywhere has degenerated into Nationalism.

On the other hand, Western Socialism, or parliamentary Socialism, is a spent force. All over Europe the parliamentary system has broken down. How could then the old social-democratic parties operate according to their conventional notions?

Between China, on the one end, and France on the other, a whole array of peoples, big and small, are actually travelling a new way of revolution. In China, the Communist Party has abandoned the programme of proletarian dictatorship, and has become a people's party. In the territories controlled by the Communists, a typically Radical Democratic State is rising; a State on the pattern of the Constitution for free India, prepared by us. In France also, the Communists as well as the Socialists, notwithstanding their respective old ideas of revolution, are converging towards the common ground of Radical Democracy. The Communist Party has discarded the programme of capturing power through armed insurrection, to be followed by the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship as the instrument in the hand of a monolithic party. Post-war France is moving towards a new political regime which will neither be dictatorial nor formal-parliamentary. There also we behold the rise of a Radical Democratic State.

That is the new political tendency which is mentioned in the

synopsis of our discussion as the basic feature of the post-war European situation. The old-fashioned parliamentary democracy has broken down. That happened already early in the inter-war period, and prepared the ground for the rise of Fascism. Therefore, conventional parliamentary democracy cannot be restored in post-war Europe. On the other hand, experience has compelled the Communists to abandon the path of insurrection and dictatorship.

All over Europe, except a few small countries, an entirely new type of State is arising. All these countries are tending towards the type of State outlined in our Draft Constitution. Spratt has pointed out that our Draft combines the Soviet system with the liberating principles of parliamentary democracy. A.K. Mukerji drew your attention to the fact of the rise of a new type of party in Europe. It represents the new political tendency. In different countries, an essentially similar party has chosen different names ; Popular Republican Party, Progressive Christian Party, Christian Socialist Party, etc. The large bulk of the middle classes, the "morass" of the time of the French Revolution, tends to follow the new party, which is rapidly winning the support also of the peasantry. The once passive "morass" is now throbbing with life. That fact has dissolved all the old ideas of one-party State and the corresponding philosophy. Together with the Communist and Socialist Parties, this new party is dominating the political situation practically in all the countries of Europe, and, in course of time, it is gaining rapidly at the cost of its partners in the coalition. The old bourgeois right-wing parties standing for the classical Parliamentary State have been reduced to non-entities, if not altogether eliminated.

The idea of insurrection and proletarian dictatorship distinguished the Communist Parties from the Social Democratic Parties. That distinction has disappeared. There are Communist Parties in all the European countries, some of them very powerful, occupying pre-dominating positions. They no longer talk of insurrection, and are entering into coalition governments instead of trying to establish proletarian dictatorships. In France, for instance, the Communist Party is immensely stronger than the Bolsheviks were in Russia in 1917. Why do they not want to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat? They have

come to realise that in Russia that might have been the only way, but in France to-day, the situation is such as rules out the possibility of capturing power through insurrection. Therefore they have discarded their pet dogmas. They have ceased to be Communist Parties except in name. In practice, the Communists have given up the idea of insurrection and proletarian dictatorship; but it still remains their theoretical presupposition. On the other hand, while entering coalition governments with the Communists, the Socialists cherish the ideals of civil liberties and individual freedom, they are against regimentation and authoritarianism. Therefore, while they are prepared to cooperate with the Communist Parties in practice, they refuse to accept the latter's theoretical presuppositions.

Between these two, there is now the third party. It may still have connection with certain reactionary elements; but it has recognised the essential feature of the post-war European situation: that the *status quo ante bellum* cannot be restored, that, if democracy is to operate, the economic structure of Europe must be overhauled. The new party, therefore, guarantees that Europe will march ahead on the new way of revolution, whatever the older parties may do or not do. The rise of the new party fulfils the condition for a successful revolution, and guarantees that the revolution will not defeat its own end. If revolutions take place of necessity, if they are historically necessary, then the necessity must be realised not only by the proletariat, but by a much larger section of society. In the past, revolutions were made by minorities. The latest instance was the Russian Revolution. To-day experience compels all objective students of history and intelligent revolutionaries to doubt if the Russian Revolution fulfilled all the promises. In the conditions of post-war Europe, the necessity for a revolution is felt by the majority of the population. Therefore, a minority rising in revolt and establishing a revolutionary dictatorship, is no longer necessary. A new way of revolution has been opened up. It is not a figment of my imagination. It has arisen out of experience. It is not necessary for revolutionaries to go with their battering rams to break down open doors. But there are prejudices backed up by theoretical presuppositions, which are impervious to the lessons of experience. The prejudices blind

the old-fashioned revolutionaries ; they suspect traps behind open doors; therefore instead of walking in, they would try devious back-doors, which practice provokes distrust and suspicion in others.

The result is that there is doubt, there is mutual suspicion, and distrust between the Russians, on the one hand, and the so-called Western Democracies, on the other. At the same time, the Russians themselves have realised long ago that the Communist Parties are no longer suitable instruments for revolution. That is why they liquidated the Comintern. The liquidation of the Comintern resulted from the fact that the U.S.S.R. was a National State. A National State can have a socialist economic structure and still remain a National State. Stalin himself once said that the republics composing the Soviet Union were national in form, but socialist in content. Owing to that authoritative description of the politico-economic regime of their Fatherland, the Russians were inhibited from condemning National-Socialism, and preferred such terms as Hitlerism and Hitlerite Germany. It seems they were also reluctant to equate Fascism with National-Socialism. Assuming that the economic structure of the Soviet Union is socialist, it cannot be denied that the U.S.S.R. to-day is a National State. A National State and an international organisation cannot function together harmoniously; therefore, the Comintern had to be liquidated. The Russians must have foreseen that after the war it would not be possible to operate through monolithic parties or proletarian dictatorships even in the countries which would be liberated by the Red Army. It would be necessary to set up coalition governments. That has actually happened in all the countries occupied by the Russians. If the Comintern was still in existence, the Russians would have to stand by the resolutions of that body; in that case, they could not advise the Communist Parties in other countries to enter into coalition Governments. Did not Lenin hurl anathema upon old Kautsky for advocating coalitions with the bourgeoisie? Having damned the advocate of coalition as a renegade, the sea-green incorruptible Leninists could not walk in his footsteps.

But the Communist Parties still exist. The logical corollary of the liquidation of the Comintern would be to disband its

"national section" also. In some countries, that logical corollary was drawn. But before long, the "mistake" was rectified. The Communist Parties are political vested interest. Once they are established, to keep them up becomes a matter of prestige, and the hope of capturing monopolist power some day keeps them going even when there is nothing to do but harm. Look at the Communist Party of Great Britain. Year after year, they are seeking affiliation to the Labour Party. If they are honest about unity, why do they not close their shop and ask all the members individually to join the Labour Party? Nobody prevents them from doing that. But they want to have their party, with their ideas and principles, and then enter somebody else's house with the object of disrupting it and then running away with it. That is Communist tactic, like the proverbial camel which walked away with the tent. There is another reason of this inconsistency—to liquidate the world Communist Party, but to allow its national sections to continue functioning. Either there is room for the Communist Parties in the present day world, or there is none. The Russians want to have it both ways. An international Communist Party was not a suitable kind of instrument for a National State to work through. Indeed, it was the cause of frequent embarrassment. But the Communist Parties in different countries can be very suitable instruments for Soviet foreign policy. Therefore, the Russians did not ask the Communist Parties to liquidate themselves. None but the simpleton would believe that the Communist Parties in other countries exist and function independently of the Russians, or that their policy is not determined by the requirements of the National State of the Soviet Union.

The result of this contradictory policy is a terrific mess. Communist Parties, they all still swear by the principle of international solidarity, but in actual political practice, they have become the most ardent defenders of national interests. There are many cases where the Communist Parties in two adjoining countries cannot have an agreed policy as regards the relation of their countries. The policy of the Communist Government of Yugoslavia regarding Trieste and the neighbouring territories, a policy primarily determined by Russian strategic considerations, puts the Italian Communists in a very

awkward position. Participating in the coalition government, they must oppose the Yugoslav claim; otherwise they will be isolated. The Russians also are in a queer position. They can let down their proteges neither in Yugoslavia nor in Italy. The result of their diplomatic rope-dancing is an appalling deterioration of the international situation, and degeneration of Communism. The Communists in France and Germany are also in a similarly awkward position. The French Communists must stand for the security of France, and that means detachment of the Ruhr Valley from Germany, that is, dismemberment of Germany. If the French Communists do not stand for that, they will be swept off in the next elections. On the other hand, the German Communists, true to Russian indoctrination, stand for a united Germany under a Communist government. Whom are the Russians going to support? You see, Communism has degenerated into Nationalism. Having degenerated into Nationalism, it has ceased to be Communism. It has ceased to be an ideal for people who look beyond national rivalries and jealousies, towards an order of human brotherhood and commonwealth. Since Communism can no longer provide that ideal, it has ceased to be the banner of revolution. Communism and the Communist Parties should not be identified. There is very little of Communism in the political practice of the Communist Parties. What is the use of cherishing an ideal which has been discarded by its protagonists? The Communist Parties should honestly admit that they are adjusting their political practice to a new situation, and, as a logical sequel to the admission, discard their dogmas and revise their theoretical presuppositions. In that case, there will be no point in calling themselves Communist Parties.

There is yet another reason for the Russians to keep up the Communist Parties in other countries, in spite of all the embarrassment resulting from the policy. They are to serve as instruments in the struggle for the leadership of Europe. The rival is the so-called democratic Socialism or Western Socialism. Here we come to the parallel process of polarisation of the European situation. It is ideological polarisation. The struggle between dictatorial Communism and democratic Socialism for the leadership of the European working class is as old as the

Russian Revolution. A Communist Party in power in a vast country provided a strong leadership to the former. Although during the inter-war period the Communist Parties suffered defeat after defeat in their attempts to capture power in other countries, the advocates of democratic Socialism were also fighting losing battles against their rival. The damaging behaviour of the Communist Parties in the anti-fascist war until the Soviet Union was attacked, discredited them seriously. The experience under Fascism created a general revulsion against the very idea of dictatorship of any kind. Democracy and liberalism got a new chance. But democratic Socialism was still without a leadership, which could stand up against the powerful rival, now further reinforced by great military achievements and the expectation of the European peoples. The relation changed immediately after the war was over, when the Labour Party swept into power in Britain. At last democratic Socialism found a leadership; and the struggle for the soul of liberated Europe sharpened in the form of Anglo-Soviet diplomatic discord.

The root of the conflict between Communism and the so-called democratic Socialism is struck deep in the cultural history of modern Europe. It is not a question of differences in tactics, but something more fundamental. Western Democracy no longer simply implies return to the parliamentary practice of pre-war days. It has a profound cultural connotation. It is a call for return to the tradition of Liberalism. It is a powerful reaction to the theory and practice of dictatorship, which have created such a havoc in Europe. The failure to appreciate the historical significance of this spirit and fall in line with it, implies a complete failure to understand Marxism. As a matter of fact, it means negation of Marxism. Because Marxism is the outcome of Liberalism. Without Liberalism, there would be no Marxism. Placed in the historical perspective, judged in relation to its spiritual ancestry, Marxism is antithetical to any dictatorship. Yet proletarian dictatorship is supposed to be the only way to Communism! Evidently, the political practice of Communism has broken away from the anchorage of the Marxist philosophy. Communism as it is preached and practised to-day is not Marxism. It is un-Marxist, anti-

Marxist.

One comrade has referred to the glorious role of the Communists in fighting Fascism in Europe, and compared it to the miserable failure of the Liberals. To illustrate the contrast he mentioned two names: Tito and Romain Rolland. Yes, Tito did play a glorious role; but don't overlook the other side of the picture. It is doubtful whether Tito could succeed without the munitions of Churchill, who risked the life of his own son to help Tito. Historical events in a stormy period like the present cannot be fitted into a neat pattern; roles are exchanged and virtues and vices are found in most unexpected quarters. Moreover, the fact is that the mobilisation of the European peoples in the fight against Fascism was not the work of the Communist Parties. The people who would never have joined the Communists cooperated with them in the resistance movement, moved not by Communist doctrines, but by democratic ideals and liberal traditions. They were so moved by the stirring call issued by men like Romain Rolland. But for the active cooperation of the educated middle class cherishing the ideals of democratic freedom and the tradition of Liberalism, there would have been no resistance movement. When after the attack upon Russia, the Communists changed their policy, they would have been isolated, because the bulk of the working class had deserted them. In power, the Nazis gave work to the unemployed—six million in Germany. The workers behaved like well-fed pigs: they forgot the Red Flag and shouted Heil Hitler. In those darkest days of modern history, the standard of freedom, civilisation and culture was borne by the damned Liberals, who would be treated no better by Comrade Thaelman or Thorez than by Hitler. It is in response to their appeal to freedom that European humanity rallied in the fight against Fascism. Without the tradition of Liberalism, Fascism could not be fought. And to say, even to day, that we can fight Fascism by rejecting the tradition of Liberalism, means that, in order to fight Fascism, we must adopt fascist methods. The Communists are acting precisely in that manner. Therefore, Communism can no longer be the road to freedom. Revolution will take place under a different flag.

What did the Communists do until Russia was attacked?

Until then, Maurice Thorez was broadcasting from Hitler's Germany, calling the French people to turn the imperialist war into a civil war. Theoretically, that might be high-sounding; but what was the practical implication of that policy? The French Communist leader was no better than Petain and Laval; he also was functioning as a collaborator of triumphant Fascism; as a propagandist of Hitler. But let us not talk of the lesser Communist lights. What did the great Comrade Stalin do? He made a pact with Hitler and remained a passive onlooker when the Nazis overran Europe. That might have been a very necessary policy for the defence of the National State of Russia. But that was not Communism. It was alliance with Fascism, for the defence of a National State. And Comrade Stalin believed so firmly in the alliance that he was disappointed or at any rate, pretended to be when Hitler attacked Russia, and called the latter a traitor! Now, had Hitler been very loyal and not attacked his Communist ally, what would be the consequence? Russia might have sat tight, but we would not be here to-day. Europe would be overrun, England would go, and the Fascist hordes would have marched through Turkey, and we would have had Subhash Bose ruling India by now as a Gauleiter of Hitler. And Comrade Stalin, in gratitude for Hitler not betraying him, would have sat tight in Moscow, and perhaps built up a powerful Red Army. But what purpose would that instrument of revolution serve, if not to stem the tide of counter-revolution? By all means, let us be loyal to our ideals, but let us also be discriminating about the ideals.

Yesterday, Shib Ray said that the fight was between Fascism and Communism on the one side, against Radical Democracy, on the other. Some of you with the Communist psychosis, might be shocked by the heresy. But don't forget the lessons of history: Revolutions are heralded by heretics. As regards overstatement, men who think boldly and are moved by strong emotions often run ahead of time. But equally often history vindicates them. Anyhow, a little reflection will show that Shib Ray's statement is not really extravagant.

Both Communism and Fascism stand for collectivism. The Communist collective ego is the proletariat class; and the Fascist collective ego is the nation. Both sacrifice the indivi-

dual on the altar of the collective ego. It makes no difference whether it is the class or the nation. That being the case, when Communists establish a National State and become the prophets of patriotism, their collective ego can hardly be distinguished from that of the Fascists. In either case, it is totalitarian. So, the dividing line between Fascism and a decadent Communism is very thin. If one is not very rigid about the philosophy of life, does not insist on the purity of his ideas, and does not continually subject his ideals to a searching criticism, without knowing it, any day he may step over the borderline, to find himself in a peculiar company. The Communists actually went across the line during the war. Therefore, Communism has ceased to an ideal which can inspire us and guide our steps in the march towards freedom.

I shall conclude with a few observations about the philosophical foundation of the political practice of Radical Democracy, the triumph of which offers the only guarantee against the world coming to a catastrophe, modern civilisation going down into decay. Until now our ideological equipment was Marxism. I have already pointed out the difference between Marxism and Communism. Marxism is a philosophy and Communism is a political practice. Communists claim that Marxism is their philosophy. Therefore, Communist political practice must be according to the philosophy of Marxism. But as soon as the political practice of Communism ceases to be controlled or guided by the fundamental principles of Marxist philosophy, it becomes rank opportunism. That has been the case with Communist practice during the recent times. To substantiate the contention, let me go back to the very fundamentals to which I referred in the beginning of this talk. What is really your ideal? Is it Communism? Our ideal, the ideal of every progressive human being, is freedom. We want to attain freedom. We set before us the ideal of Communism, because we believed that under Communism freedom would be attained. But that, as I pointed out, was a wrong idea. Under Communism, freedom will not be attained, because Communism will not be the end of history. There will be human progress beyond Communism. Therefore, we must visualise Communism only as a means towards the end. Communism is a means for

the attainment of the ideal of freedom. Once the ideal of Communism is placed in that perspective, it will be possible to appraise it correctly. We shall pursue Communism as long as it will serve as a means for our advancing towards the goal of freedom. As soon as it will be clear that Communism no longer serves the purpose, or as soon as it will be evident that Communism realised does not establish freedom, it will be perfectly consistent with our revolutionary conscience to say: No, that is not what we wanted.

Our attitude towards the Soviet Union, our defence of Soviet Policy, starts from one assumption: that Socialism has been established, or is being built, in the Soviet Union. There is still another assumption: that in a socialist society man will be free. With these two assumptions, we maintain that, Socialism, having been established in the Soviet Union, conditions favourable for further advance towards the goal of freedom have also been created there. Therefore, we think that any attack on Soviet Russia will be a danger to the future of humanity; therefore, progressive humanity must stand by the Soviet Union. Given that hypothetical view, in the case of a conflict between the Soviet Union and some other countries, we can take an uncritical attitude; as for instance, regarding the polarisation between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. We shall be for the Soviet Union. Why? Because that is a socialist country. But, unless we believe that the best possible world has been created in the Soviet Union, we cannot be uncritical as regards its internal conditions and external policies, the latter being determined by the former. Our loyalty is based on an assumption; we are loyal not to the geographical entity called the U.S.S.R.; we are loyal to an ideal, and we believe that it has been attained in that country. Since the whole attitude is hypothetical, it is only reasonable that we should ascertain if our assumption is founded on facts. Our loyalty entitles us to see what is really happening in the Soviet Union. The time has come when we must examine one of our theoretical presuppositions, that a reorganisation of society, on the abolition of private ownership in the means of production, really removes all obstacles on the road to man's freedom. So long as Communism was still an unattained ideal, we could only cherish it.

and believe in its promises; we had no chance of examining its practical validity. Once the ideal is realised, we can no longer believe blindly; we must face the reality and have the courage to tell the truth about it. Has the ideal turned out as expected? Has it yielded the promised result? Now Communism is practised in the Soviet Union, we can examine it and see whether it is really what we wanted. Many of those who for years cherished and worked for the ideal of Socialism or Communism, seem to have been disillusioned by the conditions in Soviet Union. It will not do to dismiss their opinion summarily, and condemn them as propagandists of counter-revolution. Many of those whom disillusionment has compelled to be critics of the Soviet Union, were lifelong fighters for revolution and Socialism. Why should they suddenly become counter-revolutionaries? The verdict of the rulers of the Soviet Union and their henchmen abroad cannot simply be taken for granted. The internal condition of the Soviet Union is not a matter of opinion, but of fact. We must ascertain facts and not be simply swayed by this or that opinion. Having ascertained facts, we shall form our opinion. It will be an opinion based on truth, and a revolutionary should have the courage to stand by truth.

The objective and impartial attitude on our part would be to say that, until we know the facts as they really are, we shall withhold judgment. Meanwhile, reports of people whose opinion cannot be simply dismissed, do cause a certain amount of doubt and misgiving. However, it has also to be borne in mind that, the Soviet Union being a new type of State, any danger for it is a danger for the future of humanity. Therefore, in a crisis, we should be on the side of the Soviet Union. That appears to be the only consistent and impartial attitude that a free fighter for freedom, a fighter for freedom with a free spirit, can take up. Any other attitude would mean that enslavement of my spirit qualifies me to be a fighter for freedom. I am not prepared to take up that attitude. We should take a non-committal, impartial, objective attitude regarding points of fact.

At the same time, it is necessary for us to examine some of our theoretical presuppositions which are considered to be the fundamentals of Marxism. One question that arises in my mind

is: Does freedom automatically follow from Communism? Economic disabilities and inequalities resulting from the system of the exploitation of man by man, must end as a condition for freedom. It is maintained that that condition will be created by the abolition of private ownership in means of production. A dogma has been made of this theoretical presupposition, and dogma puts an end to thought. But there is a good deal of room for thought. Just as industrialisation by itself does not mean economic prosperity for the entire people of a particular country, similarly, abolition of private ownership does not predetermine the establishment of common ownership. This fallacy of a theoretical presupposition of Marxism has been exposed by practice in the Soviet Union. We do not have to go by press reports or books considered to be anti-Soviet. We can be guided by information available from official sources. According to that information, strictly speaking, the mode of production prevailing in the Soviet Union is still essentially capitalist,—a mode of production which implies exploitation of labour. Production of surplus value is the specific feature of capitalism. The socialist economy of the U.S.S.R. also produces surplus value; that is to say, a Soviet worker produces something over and above what is allotted for his own maintenance. In other words, Soviet production is not exclusively for use. This is not criticism, much less a condemnation of the Soviet system. It is a statement of actual fact, which should compel a reconsideration of a theoretical presupposition of Marxism. And from this experience, a philosophical deduction should be made: Marxism is not the final truth; even its fundamental principles should be from time to time re-examined in the light of empirical evidence, and revised accordingly.

The history of civilisation bears testimony to the fact that surplus production—a marginal production—has been the lever of all progress through the ages. Any society must produce something more than it consumes. Otherwise, higher means of production cannot be evolved, and society stagnates. The larger the margin of social surplus, the quicker the tempo of progress. That is an empirical law of history. It explains the uneven march of civilisation—why countries of ancient civilisations like China and India lagged behind, when others forged

ahead. Social surplus being the condition for human progress, it can be maintained that exploitation of labour is inherent in organised society. The day all exploitation of labour stops, and society consumes all that it produces, all progress also stops. There follows stagnation, and organised society breaks down.

The experience of the Soviet Union compels us to examine some of our economic dogmas, and to come to the conclusion that there are certain fallacies in Marxian economics, the blind acceptance of which could, therefore, no longer be considered as the guide to revolutionary practice.

It is argued that under capitalism the surplus is appropriated by a class, which uses it for its own purpose; in communist society, surplus will be produced, but it will be used for the common good. Let us examine this assumption. What happens under the classical pattern of socialist reconstruction? The proletariat captures power and establishes a dictatorship. Dictatorship means that the State is controlled by particular class, and all the means of production are owned by the State. So, private property as such is not abolished; the ownership of the means of production is simply transferred from one class to another class, from the bourgeoisie to the proletariat. The proletarian dictatorship is supposed to be only a transition towards Socialism; eventually, the State will wither away, and we shall have Communism. Here again, we have the experience of the Soviet Union. We are told that the entire Russian people are behind the present government; we are told that the bourgeoisie has been liquidated and a classless society has been established. If that is true, where, then, is the necessity for the continuation of the dictatorship? Still, it is there. The fact leads to one or two possible conclusions: Either a classless society has not been established, the entire people is not behind the State, and therefore the Soviet State is still a coercive machinery; or the dictatorship is no longer necessary; yet, it continues because it has become a vested interest. In the latter case, we are confronted with the question; Is economic democracy possible in the absence of political democracy any more than when the position is the reverse?

Once a State is established, it becomes a vested interest. Power is not voluntarily transferred. The pattern of Marxist

theory does not provide for any transfer of power; it visualises withering away of the State; in other words, political power will cease to be a factor in social organisation. Here is something worse than a fallacy; it is an absurdity. The State is the political organisation of society. It can never disappear unless human society will revert to the state of savagery. The Russian experience calls for a revision also of the fundamental political principles of Marxism. If dogmatism prevents us from facing the issue, then as orthodox Marxists we must accuse the Russian Communist Party of having betrayed the revolution. I would rather follow Lenin, who echoing Goethe said: "Theory is grey, but ever green is the tree of life."

One may come forward with the argument that the State may not have withered away in the Soviet Union, but there is no dictatorship. With that argument, the orthodox Marxist buries his own theory. But that is his look-out. Once he admits that withering away of the State under Communism was a mere utopia, then there is ground for rational argumentation, which may be fruitful. Firstly, let it be pointed out that universal suffrage does not necessarily establish democratic freedom. It may be different on the basis of economic democracy. But there is another side of the picture in Russia. The new Constitution has established democracy; it has introduced universal suffrage. Every single Russian man and woman has the right to vote—but to vote only for one party. You may say that is a guarantee; if they could vote for other parties, counter-revolutionary parties might grow. But Marxism says counter-revolutionary parties only grow in a class society. A classless society having been established in Russia, there is no basis for counter-revolutionary parties. Why do they still insist that people vote only for one party? From whichever side you look at the situation, you are compelled to come to the conclusion that a dictatorship is maintained while it is no longer necessary, and that is a psychological problem. Once a dictatorship is established, it does not wither away. Experience compels us to discard another dogma of Marxism which contradicts Marxism itself. The State is the political organisation of society. Will a communist society cease to be politically organised? A highly complicated industrialised society must have a highly

complicated political organisation. Therefore, a State must be there. If we hold on to yet another dogma of Marxism, that the State is an engine of coercion, then, we must admit that even a communist society will require an instrument of coercion. A class dictatorship may disappear, but it will be replaced by the dictatorship of a party; proletarian dictatorship will be replaced by a bureaucratic dictatorship. That is happening in the Soviet Union.

The new communist conception of democracy, that every election must be a referendum and not an election, that citizens are not allowed to choose between a number of possibilities, but their choice must be limited to one proposal, to say yes or no, is a negation of democracy. That is no free election. It is only an attempt to broaden the base of the dictatorship. That is the real difference between dictatorial Communism and the so-called Western Democracy or democratic Socialism.

There is a philosophical difference implied in this difference of political practice. Communism does not recognise the individual; his very existence is ruled out as an abstraction. The theory is that the individual exists only as a part of the collectivity. With this theory, communism breaks away from its philosophical anchorage. It does not result from the fundamental philosophical principle of Marxism, namely, being determines consciousness. Collective life is conditional upon man's consciousness of the existence of others, and his consciousness is the result of his being. Social organisation presupposes the existence of individuals. Collective effort is the means to the end of man's self-expression, which is another name for freedom. Man must be there before he can cooperate or collectivise with others. Marx was more explicit than the above philosophical formula; he actually declared: "Man is the root of things." This liberating doctrine was formulated by Protagoras two and a half milleniums ago, and has been the basic impetus for all social and cultural progress ever since. The ancient Greek sage said "Man is the measure of everything."

There is a fashion to disparage the individual as a mere abstraction. The fashion has been paraded even in the rustic surroundings of this Camp. I protest against that fashion, which offers Communism as the alternative ideal. But concretised

Communism is a negation of freedom. Let us not be light-hearted or cynical about the ideal which we want to fight for, and die for, if necessary. I have really no new philosophy to offer. I only suggest that freedom is the ideal of all progressive and enlightened human effort, and the position of the individual is the only measure of freedom. As soon as we have a standard to measure it, freedom ceases to be an abstract ideal.

The Americans may say that theirs is the freest country, and the Russians may say theirs is the freest country. If there is no standard of judgment, if freedom is a relative term, then, let us not talk about human freedom; because, in that case, the concept of human freedom would be an abstraction. But if freedom is a human ideal, there must be a common standard. Collectivism, economic reorganisation, abolition of private property in the means of production—none of all these are the measure: the measure can only be man; that society which gives the greatest measure of freedom to the individual, is the freest society. That is the only measure. We can have no other measure.

The contention that collectively men can have a very high degree of freedom at the cost of individual freedom, is logically fallacious; it is a sophistry. Freedom of society must be the totality of the freedom of the individuals. If you reduce freedom of the individual, the totality of freedom is also reduced. Therefore, the doctrine that the individual should sacrifice for the benefit, welfare and progress of society, is fallacious. That it is not a liberating, but an enslaving doctrine, and that doctrine is not to be found in Marxism. One can trace that doctrine in Marxism only by isolating Marxism from its antecedents. All these false, mistaken, opportunist, vulgarised ideas result from the inability to see Marxism in its historical perspective. I want to save Marxist philosophy by dissociating it from decadent Communism. Only then it can be placed in the proper historical perspective and fully appreciated. With that purpose, I attach supreme importance to the individual, and desire to save the positive values of Liberalism. Marxism will still supply us the faith if we can amplify it as the philosophy not of a class, but of a free humanity. By its own nature, Marxism admits of such amplification. Orthodox Marxists

think that the entire history of the past was obliterated by a new history on the day Karl Marx was born. The Marxist theory of history has been traced to Hegel, to Hegelian dialectics. That is not quite true. Indeed, it is wrong. The fundamental principle of historical determinism was conceived two hundred years before Karl Marx. Orthodox Marxists are ignorant, illiterate and uneducated. Otherwise, they should know that in the middle of the seventeenth century, the Italian historian Vico, who originally laid down the fundamental principle of the philosophy of history, formulated it in two words which can still be our guide, namely: "History is humanity creating itself." Has Marx said anything more than that? History is humanity creating itself. Discard the un-Marxist belief that Marxism is the final truth revealed to Karl Marx by God Almighty, and you will be able to trace the roots of Marxism throughout the entire process of the evolution of ideas since the dawn of civilisation. Marxism has a rich past; therefore it can be the philosophy of a bright future. Human ideas have always been liberating. Ideas are never reactionary. Ideas become reactionary when a stage of human development heralded by certain ideas comes to an end. Immediately, a new system of ideas develops. But it develops from the old ideas. That is how Marxism developed. Socialism grows in the womb of capitalism; the corollary to that doctrine obviously is that the roots of the ideology of Socialism can be traced in the bourgeois philosophy. Marx's ideas were heralded by thinkers who are branded as the ideologists of the bourgeoisie. Indeed, no philosophy belongs to a particular class. Successive philosophical systems represent stages of the entire process of human development. Man is the maker of the social world; therefore it belongs to him. That is the moral sanction of Socialism. Similarly, man is also the maker of the ideal world. Philosophy as a whole is a human heritage.

If Marxism justified a pattern of social reconstruction advancing the absurd claim of being the final stage of human progress, to revolt against that vulgarisation of the philosophy of revolution would be a revolutionary virtue—the duty of revolutionaries. Every revolution in history ultimately established a new *status quo*, and human progress demands that every

status quo must be subverted. Otherwise, history would have come to a stop. There is no reason to believe that it will be different with the Russian Revolution. It is now a matter of experience that Communism in practice creates a new *status quo*, under which the human individual has precious little freedom. Therefore, if freedom is the ideal of human life, we must look beyond communism. Revolution, that is, subversion of the *status quo*, and reorganisation of society on the basis of more equitable and equalitarian relations, remains a necessity. But it must find a new way. The Marxist scheme of revolution postulates dictatorship that is, abolition of liberty, as a condition for success. Experience has exposed the danger inherent in the facile belief in the scheme; at the same time, experience has also proved that there are alternative ways of revolution. Professed Communists are actually travelling that way. But being still wedded to a false philosophy, which disparages humanism and denies freedom to the individual, they cannot harmonise their practice with their theory; the result is moral depravity, intellectual dishonesty and deceitfulness in political behaviour and international relations.

Experience has opened up a new way of revolution for the civilised humanity to travel; now a new philosophy is needed to illumine the new way. That philosophy can be evolved on the fundamental principle of Marxism that thought is determined by being, and this principle, in its turn, is the quintessence of the entire human experience. As a matter of fact, the need of our time is not a new philosophy; there are not many philosophers—old and new. There is only one philosophy which has evolved continuously since the dawn of civilisation, heralding, from time to time, successive stages of social development and enriching itself by the experiences thereof. What is necessary to-day is to draw inspiration from the store of the civilised man's spiritual heritage. That alone can guide the steps of mankind out of the present impasse and towards a still unexplored future believed to be full of promise. Marxism tried to do that; therefore, for nearly a century, it served as the incentive for revolutionary action. But once its votaries accomplished the revolution in one country, they naturally became defenders of the new *status quo*. Marxism ceased to be the

philosophy of the future; its function became to explain the *status quo*, to provide it with a theoretical justification. A new orthodoxy has thus grown out of the philosophy of revolution.

The new philosophy I plead for is Marxism, freed from the orthodoxy, from its association with the new *status quo*. To do that, we need only to realise that Marxism is not identical with communism; the one is a philosophy, and as such, a statement of eternal truths; the other is a political practice. If we hold high the flaming torch of Marxism, understood as the sum total of the entire human heritage, the way beyond Communism will be clearly visible. What is to be done concretely, is to replace the economic man by the moral man, to realise that humanism is not incompatible with the materialist philosophy. When I ask you to see beyond Communism, to find a ray of hope penetrating the deep gloom of our time, I do not suggest that the reorganisation of society so as to eliminate the injustice and inequalities of the old order is not necessary. It must take place; but the pattern must change, as also the means of attaining it. The problem of harmonising planned economy with individual freedom should not baffle human ingenuity. What is necessary is regarded only as the means for the attainment of the goal of freedom. Once that is done, the vision of the ideal will serve as a constant corrective for all aberrations in the practice of Communism. It is also humanly possible to prevent that the individual citizen is swallowed up by the Leviathan. Again, we need a faith: democracy is possible; only it must outgrow the fetters of parliamentary formalism. On the other hand, we must discard the fallacious doctrine that negation of democracy (dictatorship) will lead to a higher democracy.

Already in the beginning of the war, I said that democracy would survive the crisis by reorientating itself. Following up the idea born out of the greatest crisis of human history, we developed the concept of Radical Democracy, elaborated its programme in the People's Plan and the Fundamental Principles of Democratic Freedom, and outlined the structure of a new State. We also indicated the new way of revolution, to be brought about not by the proletariat under the leadership of its party, but by the great bulk of the people, comprising many

classes, operating through the People's Committees under the guidance of the Radical Democratic Party, which does not claim a monopolistic position or power. Organised democracy, operating through the People's Committees, will be the Sovereign. There will be room for any number of political parties to appeal for its patronage.

So, you see, Radical Democracy is not a mere political programme; much less is our difference with Communist practice simply tactical. It is a difference of two philosophical orientations; we place man in the centre of our scheme of things; others would sacrifice him on the altar of the collective ego. That is slavery. I reject it. It is my revolutionary duty to speak out. Otherwise, I would belie my forty years' quest for freedom. I must warn you that fallacious ideas and false ideals will lead not to freedom, but to the disaster of yet another world war, and, if the world survives that catastrophe to a new slavery. Honest revolutionaries are idealists, both in the philosophical as well as the practical sense. Idealists must have a faith. Therefore, you will hang to your old faith and move towards disaster or slavery, as if by fatality, unless you acquire a new faith. I have tried to describe the faith that gives me hope and courage to carry on. It is for you to accept it or reject it.

RADICAL ATTITUDE TO MARXISM

I do not want now to deal with the points raised by Athaide. I am extremely happy that he has raised them, in a straightforward manner. I hoped that others would also speak out their doubts and difficulties, in an intelligent and coherent manner. I put a point of view before you; you may not agree; but unless you give me your reasons, I cannot argue with you. Most probably there are many others who feel uneasy about my new-fangled ideas, which give them a creepy feeling, but they have nothing to say. The reason of this unsatisfactory attitude must be that what I have said appeared to be entirely new or unexpected for some members of our party. If that was so, I must have been deceiving the party ever since its foundation. As far as I remember, I have not done that. The ideas I expressed yesterday and the day before had been forming in my mind already for a long time. I did not make a secret of them, they were hinted at, if not explicitly stated, in my writings. You could not help noticing the importance I have been attaching to the need of a Renaissance movement to deal with cultural questions and philosophical problems. If I had absolutely no doubt about Marxism, why should I talk about a new philosophical movement? I felt the necessity of further thought on certain philosophical problems, which some may believe to have been solved once and for all by Marxism. I did not take that view. The day before yesterday, Shastriji pointed out that a speech on "What is Marxism" I delivered several years ago, started with a sentence which was fundamentally different from the Marxist approach to history. So, whatever I told you yesterday was nothing new. I never kept anything secret. If I failed to make you understand my ideas that was perhaps due to their unclearness. That is possible; the ideas are new; I was still turning them over and over in my mind. Perhaps, therefore, I could not formulate them clearly and forcefully, so as to carry conviction.

An intellectual and cultural movement on a sufficiently large scale cannot be organised in our country in a short time; therefore, I went ahead alone with the cooperation of a few, some belonging to our party and others not formally. We founded "The Marxian Way". Three issues of that magazine have been published in the last nine months; the fourth one will be out in course of a month. The ideas I have submitted for your consideration are systematically expounded in that magazine, which I have chosen to call "The Marxian Way". I want you to take note of that fact. It signifies that my ideas are not inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Marxism, although my understanding and interpretation of those principles do depart from the orthodox. I am opposed to Marxist scholasticism. I have not suddenly come to you with a revealed wisdom. Therefore I protested against Karnik's way of announcing my speech the other day. But amongst friends and comrades, one need not always take things too literally.

In my first speech, I made the confession that for several years I had been troubled by the internal stagnation of the party. I kept it to myself, although I did discuss it with those members of the party who, in addition to being comrades, are also my personal friends. It was not exactly a stagnation, but a very slow and unsatisfactory development. The external growth of the party, its quantitative expansion, might be very largely conditional upon objective factors; but its internal growth depends entirely on us. We may be only ten; our ideas may be unpopular; and therefore it may be very difficult for us to become twenty soon enough. But nothing can prevent the ten from becoming more clear about their ideas, and develop a greater degree of fervour, initiative, zeal, fanaticism. Yes, fanaticism, to propagate them. The fact caused me a good deal of anxiety. After much thought, I finally came to the conclusion that our party had no root. We are either Marxists or Communists or anything else; we are only not what we call ourselves; we have simply attached a peculiar name to us. We do not believe in ourselves; we have no conviction, spiritual, theoretical, moral or philosophical. We are always anxious to measure up to other people's standards. That is not a disparaging remark. It does not reflect on anybody's intelligence or

moral integrity. You are all very anxious to do certain things, and have suffered and sacrificed for them. But you are not clear what are those things.

Having analysed the internal life of our party, I came to the conclusion that, because of a double psychosis, which naturally resulted from the political atmosphere in which we have grown up, our party could not become an independent political factor— independent ideologically; I should say, spiritually. You know how the psycho-analyst treats his patients. He makes them conscious of what is in their unconscious mind. I decided to try that method, and have done so, to your consternation. I don't as yet know what will be the result. If it will be positive, then you will begin searching your hearts and test the fundamental principles of Radical democracy on their merit and by your own intelligence, not by quoting scriptures. This Camp has been organised with that purpose of spiritual purging and self-examination. Let us be ourselves. I thought that a large number of idealistic young people, eager to do certain things should no longer deceive themselves or allow themselves to be misled; that they should go the way they really wish to. To attain that purpose, I had to confront you with the philosophical implications of the programme and political practice of the party to which you belong. But let me tell you that I stated the fundamental principles of Radical Democracy as my personal view. The party is not committed to that point of view, having not yet discussed it freely and frankly. So far, and as far as the party is concerned, it is committed only to a political programme which is interpreted by the party members either as revolutionary nationalism or camouflaged Communism. So, whatever I told you is not to be taken as a representative view. It may not be the view of the Central Secretariat, although all its members individually may agree with me. I have placed before you my personal views. On the other hand, we gave this Camp also an official party character, because it might not have been worthwhile for you to come here only to hear my personal views. The last day of this Camp will be a meeting of the Central Political Council of the party, which will have to make a decision. And if my personal ideas are not acceptable to you, you will persuade the C.P.C. to pass a

resolution disowning everything I have said. The Radical Democratic Party will still exist, and it may be strengthened by that possible action of yours. Because, thanks to my psycho-analytical treatment, you will have become conscious of your real emotions, and not be misled any longer by a mountebank.

But I ask you to bear in mind one or two considerations. The criticism implied in the points raised by Athaide can be directed against me or the party only on the assumption that either myself or the party is committed to Marxism as it is understood by its orthodox exponents. If we start from that assumption that we are uncritical Marxists, Athaide's points are very strong. But any one of you will find it very difficult to prove that I ever justified anything I said or did by quoting Marx or referring to any authority. How often have we declared that we practise politics as a science; that our party knows no authority; that it places reason above faith? Was that all meaningless verbiage? If that was so, repudiate all that, eat your own words, and be damned in your Marxist orthodoxy. If I wanted to defend anything on the authority of Marx, and yet advanced arguments or made propositions which could not be reconciled textually with Marxism, then the aspersion that I am trying to revise Marxism would be warranted. Since admittedly I do not stand on the ground of orthodox Marxism, whatever I say may be different from it, but cannot be called a revision.

I do not regard Marxism as a methodology. You must have noticed that I have always insisted on the view that Marxism is a philosophy, something more than a system of economics, or a political theory, or again a technique of revolution, as it is called by some. Indeed, it is more than all that taken together. Primarily, it is a system of pure thought, a philosophy. The intolerant orthodox may condemn this view as idealism; it may be, and idealism may not be such a bad thing, after all. I do not stick to Marxian methodology. I am concerned with its essential philosophical features, and these again are to be seen in their historical setting. As a philosophy Marxism is the outcome of the development of thought from the dawn of history; therefore, it is the heritage of humanity; it is the ideological equipment belonging to everybody fighting for a

better world. Anything in Marxism that cannot be reconciled with that appreciation of it, I reject.

It follows from what I said that, if the Radical Democratic Party starts from that assumption, that it is a Marxist party in the sense that its programme should be based literally on what Marx wrote a hundred years ago, about economics, politics, ethics, aesthetics, and all other subjects under the sun, it may be the party some of you want, but I shall not belong to it. Judgments formed one hundred years ago cannot hold good to-day; even the best of theories must be continually readjusted to experience, if we want to avoid falling into the ditch of dogmatism. I shall not be a member of a party wedded to a dogmatic system, because I do not believe that spiritually enslaved people can lead the struggle for freedom.

In brief Athaide's points have put the question very clearly. If Radical Democracy is identical with Marxism, why then, should you sail under a false colour? Call yourselves what you believe yourselves to be, and be prepared for the consequences. I shall wish you all luck, but I shall not be with you. Do not take this as a threat. I sincerely do not believe that M.N. Roy and the R.D.P. have any causal connection. With no organisational connection with M.N. Roy, the Radical Democratic Party might have a greater chance of becoming a more effective political factor in this country, but then it would not be the Radical Democratic Party. Fundamental issues have been raised; I was eager to discuss them. We must know what we are. I do not like dishonesty, either conscious or unconscious. If we are Communists, what business have we to be outside the Communist Party? If we are nationalists, what business have we to be outside the Congress or the Congress-Socialist Party? From tomorrow we shall discuss the future of the R.D.P. Let us once for all clear this question and decide whether the R.D.P. has any reason to exist as an independent political factor in this country or not. I do not want to sail under false colours or mislead you. I have told you that a party distinct from the Congress and the Communist Party or the C.S.P. can exist in India only by virtue of an entirely different philosophical orientation, not only about the Indian situation, but also about the international situation.

RADICALISM IN INDIA

Having discussed general principles during the first days of the Camp, now we have come to concrete details. I shall take up one or two of the practical problems which have been agitating the minds of most comrades, and about which we must be very clear in our mind if we want to apply ourselves to the task of further developing our party. The analysis of the Indian situation in the context of world events has brought us to the conclusion that the perspective of the Indian situation is dominated by the rise of Fascism. That is not something new for us. We anticipated it. Therefore, the perspective should not dishearten us or create in us a feeling of defeatism or dejection. As a matter of fact, our party was founded with the object of fighting Fascism. Shortly after the foundation of the party, we realised that, while we could do very little to fight international Fascism, the time was coming when we would have to fight Fascism on the home front. To-day we find ourselves in a situation which we anticipated. Now we shall have to think very hard in order to find the ways and means for fighting the danger against which we have been sounding the alarm for all these years.

This perspective will naturally determine the discussion of the future of our party. The future of any party in India will be determined by that perspective. Some will fall in line with rising Fascism; others will resist it. The process of polarisation, political as well as ideological, which is going on throughout the world, will also be in operation in our country, and we ourselves, our party, will be involved in that process. As a matter of fact, in India the two poles are represented by the National

Congress and the Radical Democratic Party, respectively. Until now, the political situation was confused by various external factors, and by many imaginary considerations; therefore, the polarisation could not be clear. The situation is clearing up; the confusing factors are disappearing; within a short time, the foreign rule will go, and with it many imaginary grievances; the process of polarisation will become evident. Therefore, fundamentally, the task of our party will be to draw the attention of a larger and larger section of the people to this process of polarisation, which will determine the future of our country. The country must be divided in two camps. In the physical world, all poles have equal attractive and repulsive power. In the social world, will is a very powerful factor. The power of attraction or repulsion of any particular policy can be determined by the amount of will developed in that particular pole. So, if we cannot develop an indomitable will to draw a large section of the people towards the pole which we represent, all our theoretical presuppositions, or the maturity of objective conditions, nationally and internationally, will not help us, and revolution will remain a dream.

I want to repeat what I have said on innumerable occasions, and perhaps at the end of the Camp I shall deal with it again in greater detail. Revolution is not inevitable. Only objective conditions and even historical necessity do not make a revolution successful. Fundamental changes in the structure of society take place only when there is a group of individuals who feel the necessity, who see the possibility of fulfilling it, and who can develop an adequate amount of will to bring about the changes which are both necessary and possible. In absence of such a group of people revolution is not only inevitable, but even when it is necessary, it does not take place. The history of the world is littered with unsuccessful revolutions. Revolutions fail as a rule. Successful ones are exceptions to the rule. There have been very few such exceptions in entire history.

So, let us not count on the maturity of objective conditions or rely on the fatalistic view of class relations: Capitalist exploitation will sharpen the class antagonism; gradually, the oppressed classes will come in the camp of revolution; all the

reactionaries will go to the other side; and suddenly God will beat the drums of revolution, there will be a clash, power will be captured by the revolutionary class, who will usher in a new order. History never falls in that neat pattern of the textbook of revolution. In reality, movements of history are much more complicated. Those accustomed to think (rather believe) and talk in terms of the masses, ignore the human factor which is the basic factor of history, and it can be properly appreciated only in individual behaviour. Man must be man, individually conscious of his dignity and creativeness, before he can make history. Man makes history, not the masses. Man's ability to make history depends on his skill to forge the instrument. For us, the instrument is the Radical Democratic Party. Your ability to make a revolution will depend on your ability to forge the Radical Democratic Party. Otherwise, defeat will be your fate. Firstly, you have to imagine what sort of battles will have to be fought by the revolutions of the twentieth century. Then you will be able to judge what kind of weapons will be needed in such battles, and also judge what sort of materials are required for forging the necessary weapons. Having done all that preliminary work of thinking out the whole process, you will set about the task of gathering materials and forging the instrument. That is my formula of our plan of action.

In the Indian situation, dominated by the rise of Fascism, we are in an advantageous position in relation to all the other so-called leftist parties, which also claim to stand for revolution, which also profess Socialism or Communism, which also talk of a classless society, and what not. But history only will prove if they stand for the ideal of freedom. Our advantage is to have anticipated what is coming; we are not taken unawares. We had no illusions. All the other parties of the Left, some with a streamlined revolutionary theory manufactured in Moscow, others with taller pretensions, all of them with greater ability to shout and running the race for gaining popularity at the cost of principles—if they have any—all those parties have been fighting an imaginary enemy. They are all anti-imperialist parties, all their other professed ideals—Socialism, Communism, so on and so forth, are mere clichés. They thought Imperialism

was the greatest enemy of India. Once upon a time it was. But now it is dying; and for the future of India, it is only a ghost. Yet, the bogey of Imperialism has successfully clouded the perspective of the political situation, and the so-called leftist parties, including the one which claims to represent pure Marxism and which happens still to be the ideal of some of you, have contributed to the rise of Fascism by their politics of chasing a ghost. We alone laid the ghost of Imperialism, and pointed out the demon which stands behind the bogey. Those who honestly and intelligently stand for a revolution in this country must have to fight that demon. The other so-called leftist parties gained popularity by attacking the ghost, while the demon captured power. Now the ghost is disappearing. Very soon there will be no Imperialism. It is no longer necessary for you or anybody to take it from me. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has said it; Mahatma Gandhi has also announced the end of Imperialism. Now they all say that Imperialism is going. What shall the leftist parties do now? Since anti-imperialism was the revolutionary ideal, all the "revolutionary" parties will be unemployed now. A revolution of a kind has actually taken place by consent. Imperialism is going voluntarily. If it did not, it would have been fun to see how our thundering anti-imperialists could have compelled it to go.

The other parties gained popularity by joining the chorus of the demon for a National Government. Knowing that the passing of Imperialism was a foregone conclusion, we insisted that the demand of national independence should be replaced by the demand of people's freedom. It was high time to raise the question about the kind of government which would replace the imperialist government. Already two years ago, we raised the demand for a People's Government as against a National Government. Any democratic nationalist or progressive and enlightened patriot must have seen that the People's Government demanded by us would be a real National Government. The National Government demanded by the economic rulers of the country through their party, the Congress, and passionately supported by the socialists and communists, would be a fake National Government. Because, it would be controlled by an upper class minority. That fake National Government

is going to be established soon. What will the revolutionary patriots, who also demanded a National Government, do now? Having demanded it all the time, it will be very difficult for them immediately to fight against it. We alone are not so handicapped. For this great advantage, you have to thank our deviation from the dogmas of Marxism. How could we take such a fundamentally different view of the situation, if Radicalism was not an ideology by itself? We do not have to shift our position. We can immediately tell the people that Imperialism is disappearing just as we anticipated, and the National Government will not solve their problems. As camouflaged Communists, we could not do that; clinging to orthodox Marxism, as the only ideology permissible for revolutionaries, we would have fallen between two stools. History has vindicated us as the only intelligent Marxists in this country. Having foreseen, almost prophetically, what was coming, it will not be necessary for us to change our programme, to alter our line of action. We have been asking people to think of the kind of freedom they want after Imperialism disappears. Now they are confronted with this problem, and we have suggested a solution.

Because of this advantage of ours, the plan of action as outlined in the agenda logically follows from the perspective of the situation, as it emerges from our appreciation and analysis of the situation. We may still have one or two minor difficulties to overcome. The leftists who have been fighting Imperialism all this time are already manoeuvring for position, because they cannot all of a sudden abandon their old position. The ghost having disappeared, they are going to raise a bogey—to carry on the anti-imperialist fight even after the passing of Imperialism. The Congress-Socialist Party, the Revolutionary Socialist Party, and the League of Revolutionary Congressmen, the formation of which is announced in to-day's papers—all of them are going to carry on a fight against a strawman, against a bogey. If the National Government does nothing to promote the welfare of the people, these revolutionaries will not say that the National Government is dictated by capitalists or landlords; they will contend that there is still a hidden hand of Imperialism which is not allowing the National Government to do

anything. Thus, the revolutionaries of yesterday, who became popular, while unpopularity was our lot, are going to be the storm-troopers of Indian Fascism. And mind you, there are many "Marxists" and Communists among them !

That is how Hitler also came to power. Even when, with the connivance of the Entente Powers, he was securing the annulment of Versailles treaty and marching towards power, the Communists and the national-revolutionaries (in Germany also the Fascists used that label) agitated for a united struggle to free Germany from Entente Imperialism ! Similarly, in this country also, the revolutionaries who never deviated from the purity of Marxist orthodoxy and did not commit the crime which we are supposed to have committed, are bound to be the stormtroopers of counter-revolution, deceive the people and divert their attention, thereby making it impossible for them to organise themselves against Fascism. That is how Fascism succeeds. Because, Fascism is a mass movement. It is a mistake to say that revolution is all masses, and counter-revolution is supported only by the upper classes and perverted individuals. Whenever counter-revolution succeeds, it commands the support of the masses. Fascism succeeded as a mass movement in Italy and Germany. Fascism did not succeed in England because the masses could not be attracted by it. Why ? Because of the tradition of Liberalism and democracy which made the British working class and the masses in general immune against the danger of Fascism.

In our country also, Fascism will not succeed only by the Machiavelism of a Patel or the demagogy of a Nehru or with the money of Tatas and Birlas. It will succeed if the masses can be mobilised under its banner. Perhaps it will be a fraudulent banner. Because, ninety per cent of the people going the fascist way do not know that they are doing so; many may not, or actually do not, want it. To make them conscious, to tell them where they are going, to explode the false ideals misleading them, is the task of a revolutionary party in this critical moment.

Before long, the leader of Indian National-Socialism may say the same things as the leader of German National-Socialism did. When Hitler captured power, he said: Now we have made

only the first revolution—the national part of it; we shall have to wait some time for the second revolution—the socialist phase. But the second revolution never took place in Germany; nor will it take place in India. Perhaps the left wing of Indian Fascism will eventually get impatient and demand the second revolution, and meet the fate of their kind in the ranks of German Fascism. You remember Hitler's blood bath of 1934, which drowned the dream of the second—the Socialist—revolution. The orthodox Marxists in this country may suffer that fate, and that will only be the penalty for their stupidity.

This perspective should make clear the historical significance of our emphasis on anti-Fascism. It was worthwhile to court unpopularity for a time for emphasising the issue which was going to be the issue, not only for India, but for the whole world. Having done that, our party has won a place in the political life of our country. We have won that place not by the ability to talk glibly, but by our ability to think seriously and independently, and by virtue of the moral courage to have placed before the country the issue on which it was bound to be divided before attaining the goal of freedom. The conclusion is clear: Our policy in the past was right, and therefore our future is bright.

A good deal of discussion has taken place about the nature of Fascism and how to fight it. Some theoretical observations about the social background of Fascism have also been made. I wish to say a few words in that connection in order to make it clear how Fascism in our country can be fought effectively.

Fascism is not a platonic idea like cowhood or treehood or horsehood, for all actual cows or trees or horses to fit in. Fascism is a socio-political manifestation of our time and its pattern is determined by the peculiarities of the country in which it grows. German Fascism was different from Italian Fascism, and the Fascism in the East-European countries again was different from both. Therefore, we should not have an *a priori* notion about our enemy. Neither will Subhas Bose return as Indian Mussolini, nor will Patel be the Hitler of India. To put the point straight : Indian Fascism will be cultural; it will be a cultural reaction. Therefore, violence may not be such a very outstanding feature of Indian Fascism. It has been said

that Fascism is violence, violent suppression of minorities, of freedom, etc. It is not just that. In India, Fascism may even be non-violent. So, let us not be deceived by appearances. In order to succeed, Fascism must have the support of the masses; in that sense, Fascism has already succeeded, at least, partially. It has deceived the British Labour Government and British Democracy, by having apparently enlisted the support of the masses. The British Labour Government wants to hand over power to the Congress not because the Congress is supported by Tatas and Birlas, but because it appears to have the support of the masses. The British Labour Party says: We, as a party, are committed to democracy; how can we overrule a party which has the support of the masses and wins all elections? And can you dispute that the Congress has the support of the masses? We know the means by which the Congress has secured that advantage. It has got it not indeed by advocating a programme of the welfare of the masses, but by demagoguery and deceit. It has taken advantage of one objective factor – the backwardness of the masses. The cultural backwardness makes the Indian masses superstitious, religiously inclined, and given to blind faith. The Congress, with its Mahatma, has made political capital out of that factor to secure the support of the masses. So long as we do not appreciate that factor in its full importance, we shall not be able to tackle the situation. The first item of the agenda mentions that factor as one of the causes of our election defeat. Some of our revolutionary comrades might think that to speak of backwardness of the masses was a betrayal of the masses. The fact nevertheless is that it is, thanks to their backwardness, and by exploiting it with the Mahatma cult, that the Congress has won the support of the masses. Why create a new God, instead of facing the truth ?

In other countries also some similar defect was utilised by the Fascists to secure the support of the masses. In Germany, it was the old nationalist preoccupation and the readiness of the Germans to accept regimentation, and the militarist tradition. The highest ambition of any German is to put on a uniform. When Hitler put all of them in uniforms, they believed they were all supermen, and followed him. Similarly,

in our country also, the people are being put in a uniform : khaddar is a political uniform; and they also think that by donning the Mahatmic uniform, and a particular kind of headgear, they become supermen. The Indian people can be more easily regimented spiritually, because thanks to our cultural tradition they are predisposed that way. "Ramdhun" will cast the hypnotic spell. Blind faith is the characteristic of religious mentality. The Mahatma and his army of propagandists will fully exploit that asset, and persuade the gullible people that every act of the National Government is for their good; they must only be submissive and obey.

We shall have to fight the objective factor of backwardness, if we want to undermine Indian Fascism. But that cannot be done from one day to another. On the other hand, if we take the orthodox Marxist point of view, if we take the purely materialist view of life as against our "idealistic deviation", what would happen ? In that case, we should argue as follows : Because they are living in feudal conditions, the mentality of the Indian people cannot change; we must wait until India has been reconstructed as a capitalist society and a proletariat has grown to lead the people in a revolutionary struggle. That is exactly how the Communist Party, whom some of you would imitate, has been arguing, in practice, if not in so many words. Otherwise, their demand for transfer of power to the Congress and the establishment of a National Government cannot be explained.

So, a fervent, fanatical, faithful and puritanical adhesion to Marxism should persuade us to put the Indian revolution off to the Greek calends, should make of us propagandists of Tatas and Birlas and the Bombay Plan, should justify our helping the nationalist bourgeoisie capture power, even when they make no secret of their fascist ambition, with the vain hope that the bourgeoisie will create the army of the proletariat whom we shall eventually lead into the battle against the bourgeoisie. We are not prepared to take that fatalistic view of history and of revolution. Once upon a time, under entirely different world conditions, such a "Marxist" view might have been plausible. To-day it is palpably absurd, and suicidal. Because, it amounts to believing that the victory of counter-revolution

will pave the way of revolution.

We believe that man makes history; we believe that every man, if he is conscious that he is a man—neither a slave of Comrade Stalin nor of Mahatma Gandhi—will find the creative genius in himself, and only by bringing that powerful urge into the consciousness of a sufficiently large number of Indian men and women shall we forge the instrument and make a revolution. If that is not revolutionary spirit, I do not know what is revolutionary spirit. I derive that spirit from Marx's thesis on Feuerbach in which the philosophical principles of revolutionary politics were outlined.

Now let me go over to the plan of action. The object of our plan of action is to fight Fascism. Since Comrades Tata and Birla cannot make the miracle of producing for our benefit a large army of class-conscious proletarians from to-day to to-morrow, we shall have to look for some other revolutionary factor. Or we shall have to declare that for a long time no revolution is possible in India, unless we want to deceive ourselves as well as others by wishful thinking, false theories and senseless shouting. Since Tatas and Birlas cannot make the miracle, and since we want a revolution, we must believe that other human beings also can be revolutionaries, that the need for revolt against the intolerable conditions of human life can be felt also by others who do not have the privilege of being slaves of capitalism. And why do you think that only slaves can be revolutionaries? Why can you not imagine that free men can be greater revolutionaries? I mean, spiritually free men, men who can think for themselves, who do not need any authority to rely upon, nor any dogma to dictate their behaviour.

When, as a school boy of fourteen, I began my political life, which may end in nothing, I wanted to be free. Independence, complete and absolute, is a new-fangled idea. The old-fashioned revolutionaries thought in terms of freedom. In those days, we had not read Marx. We did not know about the existence of the proletariat. Still, many spent their lives in jail and went to the gallows. There was no proletariat to propel them. They were not conscious of class struggle. They did not have the dream of Communism. But they had the

human urge to revolt against the intolerable conditions of life. They did not know exactly how those conditions could be changed. But they tried to change them, anyhow. I began my political life with that spirit, and I still draw my inspiration rather from that spirit than from the three volumes of *Capital* or three-hundred volumes by the Marxists. That is the basic urge of freedom, which created this world of men, which created the feudal as well as the capitalist world, and which will create a still better world of which we are dreaming.

There is the middle class, a small class of people who have enough education to come out of the atmosphere of mediaeval backwardness which breeds the belief that all this misery is made by God and therefore we must submit to it. The very fact that nearly fifty years ago, there were perhaps only a dozen men who conceived the idea that things might be changed, proves that to-day there must be many more ready to revolt against this cultural tradition of ours. The tradition is the foundation of Indian Fascism. It is neither any symbiosis nor anybody's cartel. In Germany, it might have been the cartels, in Italy something else, but the foundation of Indian Fascism is God, the belief in God: that everything is created by God and the only thing that we can do is to sing *Ramdhun*, spin and wear *khaddar*. The Indian masses are going to be regimented in this uniform of *khaddar*. The proletariat may not put on the physical uniform, but will be readily regimented spiritually. Don't ignore the fact that *Holi* is a greater holiday for the God of the Indian Marxists than the First of May or Ninth of November. If Hitler could hypnotise the German proletariat, how much more easily will the still feudal-minded Indian "proletariat" be swayed by the Mahatma of Indian Fascism! Therefore, success of revolution in this country depends upon the type of people who fifty years ago showed signs of revolt, if it is ever to take place in our time. What are you after all? Why cannot you have confidence in yourselves? You are revolutionaries, not as worshippers of the Marxist God, but on your intrinsic merit. And why should you think that we are the privileged few? We come from the middle-class. If we can be what we are to-day, there is no reason why others of our class cannot be like us. Search yourselves for

the reasons of your being de-classed. It is because your class is doomed to degradation and slavery. Why not try to find a revolutionary elite in a class which has really been proletarianised and which has the intellectual equipment to be conscious of the urge of freedom?

And that is nothing new. I said the same thing in the first Dehradun Camp, six years ago. If you have forgotten it, I am sorry, because it is of vital concern for us. Because it can feel the urge for freedom, while the masses are callous, the middle-class was swept by the emotion of nationalism, which promised to satisfy the urge. Subsequently, when we approached the middle-class with our anti-Fascist appeal they were so obsessed with nationalism that our arguments did not convince them. But now things are changing. Imperialism will go. There will be a National Government. There will be industrialisation according to the Bombay Plan; and we know that the economic conditions of the country will not be changed materially. A few thousand educated young men may get jobs. But the unemployed masses will still starve; I mean the army of unemployed middle-class. Their hopes will be dispelled. Nationalism will have triumphed, but their lot will still be degradation. That is the objective factor we must seize as our asset. As against the objective factor of the political backwardness of the masses, which Fascism will exploit, we shall rely on another objective factor, qualified and suitable to fight Fascism. And if you will not agree with me that every single one of them is as good as every worker and peasant, then let us not argue any more. You will get hold of the workers and peasants only if you have enough of such men who consciously feel the necessity of revolution and are moved by a determination resulting from that consciousness. One hundred of them will mobilise millions of workers and peasants. Do first things first, and give credit where the credit is due.

I have already spoken about the new way of revolution. But I am afraid there is still a lot of doubt in the minds of some. So, you will allow me to deal with this question at some length. Let me begin by repeating that we have not discovered a new way of revolution. I emphasised on that point when I spoke last time. Yet, I get the impression that some of you

still think that we have discovered a new way because we did not like the old dirty way; that the new way is a neat way strewn with roses. That is not the case. We simply learned lessons, not only from the history of the world during this war, but also from events since 1919. What did we find? We found that the Marxist pattern of revolution, or to be more correct, the Communist pattern of revolution, did not succeed anywhere. If there is one failure or two defeats, you may say they are due to mistakes. But if you have a whole series of failures, you simply cannot close your eyes to it. You have to draw some lessons from it. On previous occasions, particularly in the book "The Communist International", I explained the cause of these failures. To summarise: when the classical Communist scheme of revolution was imagined, the armed forces of the State had not grown into such a formidable factor as now. An eighteenth century army or even a nineteenth century army, could be overwhelmed by a mass insurrection. But the mechanised army of to-day is a different thing. The old idea of winning over the army has also become untenable. Then, counter-revolution now operates internationally. The army of a country in the throes of revolution may waver or actually join the revolution; but there are other countries to intervene promptly. The ordinary soldiers may be recruited from the peasants and workers, but the officers come from the upper classes. Therefore, the old idea of the decomposition of the army does not work any more. During the inter-war period, the threat of revolution in any country was countered by the threat of armed intervention from outside the country concerned. That was the cause of the failure of revolution, one after another. We simply drew lessons from that experience.

When we talked about the new way of revolution, we were not living in a vacuum, as is imagined in a note submitted by some comrades from Calcutta. Yesterday, S. K. Das said that there is a general feeling in the party that we have discarded the old way of revolution, because it is no longer available to us; therefore we talk about new ways of revolution without knowing what they are. But the position is not so hopeless. We are neither living in a vacuum nor groping in the dark. We talked about the new way of revolution already in

1942, and our approach was strictly Marxist. According to Marxism, a combination of three factors creates what is called a revolutionary crisis. They are: breakdown of the established economic system, decomposition of the State, and the existence of a consciously revolutionary party. Marxism also teaches that the State is the political superstructure of the established economic system. Therefore, maturing of the second should necessarily bring the first into operation. Experience, however, did not fulfil this theoretical expectation. After the first world war, even in defeated Germany the State did not break down, although the country was in a state of economic chaos. Particularly, the army remained intact, even after defeat. Therefore, revolution did not succeed. The second world war, soon after its beginning, promised a different outcome. Already at the end of 1942, it was clear that the established State was disintegrating; we took notice of the fact, and said that the *status quo* of 1939 could never be re-established. We meant that the previous social order with its State could never be restored. The revolution thus was on, and it was travelling a new way. Therefore, we characterised the anti-fascist war as a revolutionary war, irrespective of whatever might have been anybody's design. If the State to be overthrown by revolution had already broken down before any revolutionary upheaval on the classical pattern, it was idle, if not actually absurd, still to plan it. So, a revolution, overthrow of the old social and political order, was accomplished in an unexpected manner. That is the empirical basis of our theory of the new way of revolution. There is a logical basis also.

The decay of capitalist economy and the breakdown of the State create conditions favourable for revolution, because they mean decomposition of the class pattern of that society. The stability of an established order depends on the endurance of social relations which constitute its foundation. Its breakdown, therefore, presupposes dissolution of those class relations. That by itself is the revolution. Decomposition of the class structure of a social order spells its collapse. A revolution takes place. We were not alone to notice those peculiar features of the European situation. A number of revolutionary intellectuals reorientated their ideas accordingly. The new revolutionary

Literature did not reach this country until after the war. Our reorientation about the theory and practice of revolution took place independently. It proved that we were Marxists; our ideas were determined by the experience of the world. "Being determines consciousness" is not an empty formula with us. We practise the philosophy we profess, and by doing so we qualify ourselves to elaborate and enrich it. We do not suck ideas out of our thumbs. If our ideas about a new theory and practice of revolution were not the inevitable and logical consequence of the prevailing conditions, people in different parts of the world independently could not have thought in the same manner. They all deduced the same conclusion from a commonly observed reality. Those who lived in an imaginary world stuck to their dead dogmas. They do not agree with us, accuse us of revising Marxism, because they understand neither Marxism nor the trends of the contemporary world.

The possibility of a new way of revolution cannot be conceived by people whose thinking process is weighed down by an obsession that class society is indestructible; that it can never disintegrate beyond repair. This obsession that revolution never takes place really of necessity; that history changes only when a wilful minority takes it in hand, denies you the right of existence. The function of revolution is to overthrow an established State. You cannot do that before the established State disintegrates. If the theoretical foundation of your existence is the unshakable faith that class society never disintegrates, then you have no business to exist; because, in that case a revolutionary situation will never be created, and there will be no revolution. That is how orthodox Marxists are deviating into Idealism.

We are not so very much in the dark about the new way of revolution, just as we have not discovered it. We have not discarded the old way of revolution for reasons of our own. If not just for the fun of it, but to attain the goal, you can still travel the old way, I am prepared to follow you either with a battalion of proletarians; or with bombs and pistols. I am not afraid of insurrection, nor should I make a fetish of it. That was the road to revolution once upon a time. To-day that is a blind-alley, and a bloody-alley. Bloodshed for no purpose

is insane, and when that is advocated, even after its futility has become evident, it is criminal. We have simply learned from world experience that revolutions no longer take place in the old way. That has also been indicated by experience. New way to revolution, however, is not a *Mantra* for us. It being a new way, there is no *cliche* about it, no set pattern; it will be different in every country. Our new way will not be exactly on the pattern of the Chinese or the Polish or the Yugoslav way: it will be an Indian way, and we shall have to work it out ourselves.

Man's thinking process is often tyrannised by words. And we are not free from that. Many members of our party are haunted by two words; co-operation and constitutionalism---both practices are believed to be repugnant to revolutionary politics. Non-cooperation has been the political creed of India for twenty-five years; we have all along criticised this negative cult as sterile. Experience has proved that to be so. The non-co-operators co-operated in the past and are on the point of abandoning the cult once for all. Yet, for some of our comrades, the idea of co-operation remains taboo. Some of our ultra-revolutionary members have never got over the guilty conscience about our offering co-operation in the anti-fascist war. Some non-co-operators co-operated with Fascism; others would have done so if the opportunity came; they had no scruple about that. Yet, they are sea-green incorruptible revolutionaries whom we should imitate. In Europe, Communist Parties in some countries actually co-operated with triumphant Fascism in the earlier years of the war. Nevertheless, some of you still square your conscience with the sneaking belief that the Radicals are camouflaged Communists. Tyranny of words drives you to such a shameful position.

Already in 1942, we anticipated that after the war elections would be held, and the future Constitution of India would be framed by the newly elected Assemblies. If we wanted to influence the political future of India, we could do that only by going in the Constituent Assembly. Therefore, we placed before the party the task of preparing for the coming election. Once again we acted on the principle that revolutionary practice must be adjusted to the given situation. The danger of Fascist

invasion was receding; but those who would have welcomed the "liberators" were still there. Dying Imperialism was preparing for putting Indian Fascism in power. The relation of forces between revolution and counter-revolution was overwhelmingly against the former. Any attempt of the revolutionaries to capture power in that atmosphere by the classical method of insurrection would only make things easier and more convenient for counter-revolution—the alliance of departing Imperialism and nationalism thirsting for totalitarian power. In any case, an insurrection in that situation would be a reckless adventure. It could not possibly be a mass insurrection. The regrettable fact was that the masses were already hypnotised into the camp of counter-revolution. In one word, revolutionaries capturing power by insurrection was out of the question. But there are more than one method of capturing power.

The idea of Constituent Assembly was introduced in this country by us. We visualised the rise of the Constituent Assembly as the organ of popular sovereignty capturing power from Imperialism. The non-cooperators did not like the idea. They wanted Imperialism to transfer power to themselves. Imperialism was anxious to oblige its friend, the enemy. So, the Constituent Assembly was to meet under entirely different circumstances. It was not to be the organ of popular sovereignty for capturing power from Imperialism, but of the struggle for the capturing of power abdicated by Imperialism. The contending parties were the upper classes and the people, in other words, Fascism and revolution which later could take place only under the banner of Radicalism. The Constituent Assembly was to be the battleground between Fascism and Radicalism.

With that perspective opened up by the situation, as it was already in 1942, we came to the conclusion that the next battle for freedom was to be fought not on the barricades, but at the polling booths in the coming election. That realistic resolution was interpreted by some members of the party as a drift towards constitutionalism. Again, the tyranny of words. Anything to do with Constitution is constitutionalism. It is forgotten by the pure revolutionaries that even if you capture power by insurrection, you will still have to frame a Constitution. The future Constitution of the country is the political issue before the

country. If we want to be a political party we shall have to concentrate on that issue and join it in the manner open to us under the given relation of forces.

Now let me turn to the letter from some members in Calcutta. It is an important document. It raises two points: one regarding the policy of the party, and the other regarding organisation. The policy and the internal organisation of the party are inter-connected. It is contended in the letter that the leadership of the party is not quite sure whether we should abandon insurrectionary politics and adopt an evolutionary course, or not. The last sentence of the document is: "We therefore suggest that the party leadership should declare either in favour of the insurrectionary ideal or of an evolutionary course." That is a significant statement. Insurrection is not a tactic, a strategy, a way to revolution. It is an ideal! Perhaps that is an unwitting mistake of terminology, which, however, reveals subconscious emotion. There are some for whom insurrection is an ideal. Perhaps the comrade who wrote the document (a document is never collectively written, though it may be so signed) is no longer conscious that that is his idea; but whatever is in our subconscious mind very largely determines our emotions, and even our thoughts.

A task is allotted to the leadership. The proper procedure for these comrades however should have been to declare their faith in a straightforward manner, and say: We cannot pursue this equivocal policy any longer; we stand for the insurrectionary ideal and ask the party to follow it. But they prefer to sit on the fence, and not taking on themselves the responsibility of deciding the issue. That is not a revolutionary mentality. That is, as Spratt says, a bad intellectual habit.

The New Way of Revolution is neither an assumption nor a theory with us; it is a lesson of history. If that is not sufficiently clear with some comrades, then there must be a difference of approach, and we shall never understand each other. We must start from some point of agreement. That point was the analysis of the world situation. I am very glad that some comrades have raised the issue; but I must say that they should have raised it with a greater intellectual honesty. If there is any confusion, that is not due to lack of clarity on the part of the

Leadership. You read all our party literature; there is no equivocation. There may be lack of clarity on the part of the party membership; and that may be due to two factors, either inability to understand it, or an entirely different approach to our problems. In the former case, it would be an honest attitude: in the latter case, it must be inferred that the comrades have their theoretical assumptions. We start from an analysis of facts, and we use theories only for our guidance. Theories are not dogmas with us. They must be revised in the light of experience.

The contention is that it was never made clear whether the transformation of the State was to be brought about by the action of the toiling masses, and if so, how. It is an irrelevant argument. We never said that we were going to transform the State. We simply said that under the impact of the war the old social order was disintegrating and its super-structure, the State, was also crumbling with it; consequently, other ways of revolution were opening up. The old obstacles were no longer there. The war was breaking them down. If you do not take notice of what we have said all along since 1942, it is not for you to complain that we have not made it clear. You ought to point out that this or that in the party literature is not clear. You cannot plead ignorance, as one comrade did yesterday when he said that he had not come here equipped for the discussion. The fact is that there are members in our party who still believe that insurrectionary politics is preferable; they idealise it. As I said already, please prove that it is still possible, and I shall follow you.

To counterpose insurrectionary politics as against the evolutionary course, is not warranted. We speak of new ways of revolution, we do not propose an evolutionary course. Then, comrades, let me remind you that the new way of revolution was discovered by us even before the war. Do you remember our controversy with the Communist Party about the Constituent Assembly? Already then we were visualising the new ways of revolution. I do not know how many of you were present at the Faizpur Congress, when Dange polemised against me. He said that the Constituent Assembly would rise after the capture of power. I asked him: How are you going to capture power? What is your instrument for capturing power?

His instrument was the Communist Party. The Constituent Assembly was only a slogan for them to deceive the people. We were honest about it. We thought, in India the proletariat or any other single class was not strong enough to capture power. If we say that the bourgeoisie cannot make a revolution, the logical corollary is that the proletariat cannot make it either. If the father is impotent, how can a son be born to him at all ?

Since neither the revolutionaries of the past nor the revolutionaries of the future are there, India must discover a new saviour. The old revolutionaries and the new revolutionaries together constitute no more than five per cent of the people; cannot a new Messiah come out of the remaining ninety-five per cent? The answer to that question posed by history, was our idea of the Constituent Assembly. Because that was a new way of revolution, orthodox Marxists were incapable of seeing it. The new way was actually discovered before 1942, when I was still in jail. We have not been frightened out of the heroic path of revolution either by Fascism or by the war. We have been thinking seriously about revolution. We believe that man can remake the world, that a group of people feeling the urge with sufficient intensity, conscious of the creative power of man, *can* remake the world. Therefore, we did not want to wait for the bourgeoisie to capture power and create a proletariat so that it might become the vanguard of the revolution in some distant future. We felt the necessity of remaking the world, and wanted to begin with the job, and to forge an instrument for doing so out of the materials available in this country, in our days. We have succeeded in evolving a new theory. It is not a deviation from Marxism. If there is going to be a revolution in India, it will take place that way. There is no other way. Suppose you organise a cadre party, either of the proletariat, or of the old classical type of revolutionaries; the insurrectionary idea is older in this country than the Marxist and that tradition has also come into our party. We organise a cadre party; give it a good new leadership; and an iron core of the party is also shaped. How big will it be? It cannot be more than 10,000 or 20,000. Then we proceed to prepare for an insurrection. Shall we be left alone ? By that time, we shall have a National Government, and Jawaharlal Nehru, ably assisted by

the Communist Party or the new Revolutionary Congressmen's League or the Congress-Socialist Party, under the strains of *Ramdhum*, will mobilise the masses—an army thousand times larger than your cadre party. They will also have a cadre, consisting of storm-troopers, of their new Civic Guards. At the first sign of our tiny army moving towards the barricades calling for a general strike and perhaps armed with some smuggled pistols, the Congress Civic Guards will shoot us down with tommy-guns. And finally, let us not forget the Mahatmic spell can produce much greater mass pressure than an insurrectionary cadre party can ever do, and that will tip the scale on the side of counter-revolution. A cadre party committed to insurrectionary politics, whether Marxist or old-fashioned revolutionary, will be faced with that perspective. Unless you can prove that an insurrectionary politics can have any possibility of success, we are not simply prepared to be terrorised by your broadside against the leadership. As against wishful thinking or sheer adventurism, we propose a practical programme. It is not new; it was formulated on the basis of an exhaustive analysis of the Indian situation made six years ago at the first Dehradun Camp. Let me recapitulate that analysis in outlines.

In our country, the bourgeoisie did not grow as a fully differentiated and sufficiently large class. Therefore, we do not have a stereotyped articulate capitalist society, for which the Marxist pattern of revolution was prepared. In India, the classes are inbred, the vast bulk of the people being more or less an amorphous mass. A monolithic party of the proletariat can have no social basis. The ideology, programme and demands of any particular class cannot rally the whole people. At the same time, a vast majority of the people can be mobilised with a humanist appeal—a programme of political freedom, social reconstruction and cultural progress, all palpably beneficial for most men and women. That is possible. Because, Indian society is not a healthy organism; it is diseased. It is based, on the one hand, on decomposed feudal relations and, on the other, on weak, halting, capitalist relations. There is no economic cement to hold it together, no economic cohesion. On the basis of such a society, no stable State can be built. There could be a stable imperialist State imposed from outside.

That is now gone. The rising national State will not be able to stabilise itself, because it will be confronted with baffling economic problems and deep-seated social contradictions. Such an unstable State can be pulled down easily, if the proper method is adopted. Therefore, we are so very particular about the philosophy of our politics and the structure of our party. It must be a party not of the economic man, belonging either to the bourgeoisie or to the proletariat; it will be the party of the moral man. Its appeal will be directed to human beings, not to classes. Appeal to class interest goes over the head of the people, because classes are not clearly differentiated; the proletariat is half-peasant; the peasantry is half-feudal and largely proletarianised; the urban petit-bourgeoisie is proletarianised, but not free from the feudal mentality. Capitalist and feudal relations are inextricably interwoven. There is no sufficiently large group with a common interest. Therefore, the appeal to revolt against the intolerable conditions of life must be addressed to individual men and women, particularly to those who are qualified to appreciate human values. A party of moral men, moved by the ideal of human freedom, therefore, alone can be the instrument for pulling down the Fascist State rising on the unstable foundation of a disintegrated society. The type of the revolution will be determined by the peculiarities of social conditions and cultural atmosphere; a new type of revolution requires a new kind of party as its instrument. That is historical determinism, which is the core of Marxist wisdom.

When we were in the Congress, we proposed that the primary Congress Committees should be organised as units of a democratic State. Outside the Congress now we think in terms of People's Committees and People's Conventions. We are pursuing our old idea of Constituent Assembly. The newness in our idea is that power will be captured not by a party, but by those Committees, which will constitute the foundation of a democratic State. Without such a foundation, you can never build a State within a State. You can do that only within a State which is already shaking. The perspective of building a State within a State is still there. The Indian Fascist State will be ever more unstable and rotten than the Imperialist State. There will be widespread economic unrest; instead of clear-cut

class conflicts, there will be communal conflicts. In the midst of such a flux, it will be easy to organise People's Committees, provided that there will be a purposeful party of the people composed of individual men and women.

If you still think in terms of the Russian Revolution, why cannot you see that the people's Committees can be the same thing as Soviets? Why do you want a Russian word? We propose to organise people's Committees and build up the pyramidal structure of a democratic State. Yet, you say that we have given up the revolutionary way, and justify your unwillingness to work by saying that Fascism is too strong. That will not help us. During the war, we were perhaps unpopular and could not do much to pursue our revolutionary way. But now those obstacles will not be there. We cannot wait until they altogether disappear. Propaganda must precede the political offensive. And our propaganda will be addressed mainly to the educated men and women who are destined to lead the revolution in India in the given situation. Both in Germany and Italy, the Communist Parties failed to realise that, and therefore, they could not stop the rise of Fascism. Belief in a one class party persuaded them to neglect the middle class, which even in capitalist countries plays a decisive role. So it provided the storm-troopers of Fascism, and when Fascism in power threw some crumbs to the proletariat, they also followed Fascism.

We must appeal to that class of people which is capable of appreciating some human values, which can be moved by ideals greater than bread and butter, whose politics is not entirely determined by the selfishness of one particular class which is hungry. We must get over the idea that we are the chosen people of God. If we can appreciate high ideas, there are others who can also do so. We shall place before them not the ideal of proletarian dictatorship and classless society, but the ideal of human freedom. We shall tell them that, if you allow yourselves to be hypnotised by *Ramdhun* you will have to send your wife to the kitchen and not allow your daughters to go to college. I have no doubt that there are many who will appreciate your ideas. And with them we shall create a general staff of revolution. That is our plan of action.

Concretely speaking, the constitutional issue is the issue,

and this issue will be understood by the educated class, not by the peasants and the workers. India is going to have a new Constitution; we shall ask them whether they want the kind of Constitution recommended by us or a Constitution made in England, which is not a Constitution at all, because it will not alter the rotten social structure of the country. While carrying on the propaganda, we shall forge the instrument for eventual action, and that instrument is People's Committees and People's Conventions. How long it will take I do not know. Perhaps only a few years, or many years. But unless the party is free from all philosophical falsehoods and theoretical fallacies, we can do nothing, either to-day or in the future.

What is our immediate plan of action? Until the next party conference, let us not do anything more than strengthen ourselves ideologically. The discussion of this camp should be continued throughout the party. Every member of the party must know clearly what is Radicalism, must know what he is and what he stands for. The fundamental principles of Radicalism will crystallise out of the discussion here. They must have the intelligent sanction of the entire party. As far as I am concerned, the programme of the party can be stated in one word; it is, freedom; and freedom is not an abstract concept. It means the right of individuals to choose how best each can unfold his or her creativeness and thus make the greatest contribution to common welfare and social progress. The philosophical connotation of this programme is evident. It can be intelligently accepted and effectively acted upon only by men and women who can see that ethical values are greater than economic interests, and revolt against economic exploitation and inequities as immoral practices. Therefore I said that the Radical Democratic Party must be a party of moral men, of de-classed and disinterested individuals. Call it an idealistic deviation, if you please. I would plead guilty to the charge. Because, I cannot think of any great social upheaval except under the impact of a revolutionary philosophy of life. Radicalism is more than a mere political programme, a plan of social reconstruction. It is a philosophy of life.

OUR FUTURE

I do not want to summarise the discussions of the Camp. That would be impossible. We have discussed a whole variety of problems during these ten days, and one cannot possibly summarise all that in a talk of an hour or so. I shall only try to make a few remarks on one or two things which appear to me to be of fundamental importance, and also try to clarify one or two points which, I feel, are still somewhat uncertain in the minds of many comrades present here. Perhaps I am mistaken. Perhaps the unclearness I apprehend is not there, and therefore, what I shall say, might be a rather boring repetition. But there are certain things which can never be repeated too often, because we are very apt to forget things even if they are of very great importance.

In the beginning, I want to offer you an apology, and also make a personal statement. I want to offer you an apology for springing a surprise on you. Perhaps many of you did not come here expecting to discuss questions which do not appear to have any direct bearing on politics, and about which many of us had ideas regarded as either final truths or dogmas. My bad habit being always to shake final truths and destroy dogmas, I found it necessary to do the same thing regarding certain ideals which have been cherished by many members of our party. However, I want to make it clear that the point of view I expressed regarding philosophical problems are purely my personal views and I do not expect any member of the party to accept them on their face value. It is quite possible that many of you have not yet seen what is the connection between my philosophical views and the politics of our party. It is quite

possible that many of you think that we are revolutionaries concerned with effective political action; what is the use for us to come together here and discuss philosophical problems. If you feel like that, I shall try to spare your feelings with the conviction that, sooner or later, you will also think as I do. There again, one question may be pertinently asked: If these are my personal views, and I am not yet in a position to convince you that there is a very intimate connection between politics and philosophy, what business did I have to place before you my personal views? I shall answer that question briefly.

In a way, I have a proprietary interest in the Radical Democratic Party and that proprietary interest is in the process of liquidation. I also want to transfer power, as honestly as British Imperialism is doing it! But having advocated certain political theories and political practice, which placed a number of people in a rather awkward, difficult and inconvenient position, I was feeling all the time somewhat guilty. I was perfectly satisfied that what we did politically, risking popularity, apparent isolation, etc., since the beginning of the war, was perfectly justified. But I was not quite sure that my feeling was shared by all the members of the party, notwithstanding the fact of their having gone through very difficult ordeals for that political practice. We often do such things. We often develop a very high degree of zeal and enthusiasm for doing certain things for which we really do not possess any inner conviction and an intellectual conviction is not always an inner conviction. A moral and emotional conviction goes deeper. Man, being essentially a rational animal, often finds it very difficult not to do certain things which appear to be reasonable, although otherwise they may be undesirable. He is intellectually convinced that certain things are to be done, and does them. But in the heart of his hearts, there is always some doubt and scepticism; that is what we call moral scruples. I felt that there was a moral scruple which was disturbing the soul of many members of the party. Therefore I wanted to explain to you that I had no scruple, and that what I did was not the result of a rational intellectual conviction only, but also of moral conviction. It sprang from a much deeper source than anti-Fascism or the desire to see Hitler or Mussolini hanged or

to find some new pattern of building society or reconstructing the factory chimneys in a different shape.

Nevertheless, I can see quite easily that for pursuing the politics of our party, it is not necessary for all of you to agree with my philosophical views. And before we disperse, I want to tell you that you must not go back with the idea that, unless you see eye to eye with those philosophical views, you would be bad Radicals. But I want you also to know that I could not pursue those political practices unless I had those philosophical views. If you do not feel like that, it is perfectly alright. In that case, regard my philosophical views sympathetically as my personal views and reject them, if you like. But I wanted to say yet another thing to explain something that I said and that you took as a joke; that is, my desire to transfer power, so to say. It so happens that I had something to do with the foundation of the party, and did something for the development of its political theories. But, of late, I have been losing taste for politics. I do not find enough satisfaction in political activities. But do not run away with the idea that that is frustration or defeatism. Nothing of the kind. I still believe that, if anything is going to happen in India, that will be the result of the political practice we advocate, and I further believe that, if there is going to be a new world as we all visualise, and it will be a new world of freedom, Radical politics will have an application even beyond the frontiers of India.

Yet, I am not quite satisfied any longer with political activities. I can now do other work according to my inclination, because I am convinced that the Radical Democratic Party has come of age. It can stand on its own legs and go ahead. It will need me still if it shares my feeling that a decent politics, a human politics, cannot be practised except as the expression of some higher moral urge, according to some philosophical principles. Then you may need me still. But if you think that politics can be practised without any connection with the problems of philosophical truths, morality and all these so-called and despised higher values, then, I think, you will not need me. My being with you will rather handicap you. So, just as the Mahatma says that transfer of power will be good both for Britain and for India, so in this case I feel that my leaving:

the party to practise politics will be good for me as well as for the party.

Before I go over to speak about other things, I crave your indulgence for still a word or two about a subject which has been discussed at great length, that is the question of leadership. Nobody is perfect. No leadership is perfect. The leadership of the Radical Democratic Party may have committed mistakes; let me be still more frank: when I talk of leadership, I do not mean something which goes from top to bottom throughout the organisation. That kind of integrated, all-pervading leadership, which coincides with the party from top to bottom, has not yet been developed by the party, and to develop that is its business. When I speak about the stagnation of the qualitative growth of the party, I mean the absence of that kind of leadership. But now, when I speak of leadership, I speak of the top leadership, more concretely, about half a dozen people who are not only my comrades, but also my friends. I can quite conceive that in the ranks of the Radical Democratic Party, there are many people incorporating potentialities which will eventually make them surpass those who are to-day leading the party. But let me tell you one thing. I have had some experience; I have seen revolutionary parties and leaders in many parts of the world. I have had opportunity of knowing personally and working closely with almost all the great leaders of the contemporary revolutionary movements; and I can tell you that the half a dozen people leading the Radical Democratic Party can be compared very favourably with every single of those great leaders of the revolutionary movements of our time. The difference is in power. With power, the most mediocre man can be the greatest leader of the world, and without power, the greatest intellect may pass unnoticed. A Molotov can appear in London and talk big things, because he has the Red Army behind him. But neither Tarkunde nor Parikh, for instance, can do that. They have had to make themselves felt by their intelligence alone, a thing which is very little in demand and not much appreciated. On the other hand, the sort of power which may be available to them within the party—and, if I have followed the discussion properly, they could assume that power with your democratic sanction—they

do not want to exercise that power. It is the power of enforcing discipline. They do not believe that mechanical discipline is the best method of building up a party which proposes to create a new world of freedom. They do not believe that a regiment of robots is the suitable instrument for the struggle for freedom. They want the Radical Democratic Party to be an association of spiritually free men for whom discipline is a matter of moral conviction. Therefore, they are greater than the other successful revolutionary leaders. That opinion based on an intimate association of working together for years, has also given me the conviction that, for political practice, the Radical Democratic Party can as well do without me. I told you all this because I shall be waiting for a reply, not to come in the form of a vote or a resolution. I shall observe your reactions, in your work—your reactions to the things discussed in this Camp will be the reply for me.

A word about discipline. I conceive it as organisational ethics. Is that not another bourgeois deviation? What has ethics got to do with politics or party organisation? A negative or utilitarian attitude to ethics results from the "pure Marxism" which knows nothing beyond social relations and productive forces. Interpreted as the outcome of the evolution of human thought—the age-long search for truth—Marxism does not exclude morality. Discipline results from the moral sense of responsibility. Enforced by threat or compulsion, discipline becomes an encroachment on freedom. That kind of discipline may hold a party together, and such a disciplined party may bring about a revolution. But it can never establish freedom. Because, negation of freedom cannot lead to freedom. Therefore, we do not want mechanical rules, but organisational ethics.

Why does a man join the party? Because, he agrees with its principles and programme. An attitude and a code of behaviour follow from that agreement. If the man is not a liar, lying even to himself, he must want to act according to the principles of the party and do something for the implementation of its programme. Mechanical rules of discipline are needed in a party which is moved by all sorts of considerations, save a moral conviction and fervour. The Radical Democratic Party can do without that sort of discipline, because it has a

philosophy.

So, you see, even concrete questions like party organisation, discipline, centralisation, etc., can be referred back to fundamental principles, moral convictions and ethical values. I want the Radical Democratic Party to be composed of individuals inspired by those things. If we can get together people of that type, certainly the Radical Democratic Party will be strong enough to cope with the very difficult task before us. It is grasping the magnitude of that task. To expedite the process, I thought we must do some heart-searching and give ourselves some thorough shake-up. I was searching for an answer to the question why we could not grow in stature of the individual members of the party. Nobody could prevent us from doing that. At last, I found that some inhibition and shortcomings in ourselves prevented our growth, both as a party and as individuals. I came to the conclusion that we must either have a renaissance of the party or bury it. I have told you what I believe to be a revolutionary faith and revolutionary ideal, for which a man can live and die. Now, it is for you to choose or not to choose. If you share my faith and accept the ideal, there is a bright future for the party. Not doing so, you may still be able to do things. In that case, I shall wish you luck and part company. Because, the Radical Democratic Party would then not be the party I wanted to build. But now that the child is born and can walk by itself and wants to go a different way, it should be left alone. You have had your elementary education, so to say. I have told you what I wanted you to be. But you are old enough to go your own way, wherever you want. Nobody wants to impose on you.

I have spoken so frankly, because I want you to think, and it will require a good deal of thinking. But, for heaven's sake, do not talk light-heartedly. I have given you some intellectual food. Chew well, and try to digest. If you cannot, vomit it out. But do not go about and feed others with your undigested food. Such talk will paralyse the party. If you have really appreciated our discussions here, you will now go to the people only with our plan of action. Whatever we have talked among ourselves, should give you the conviction and enthusiasm to do so.

All this time I felt that a gulf was opening between us. I wanted to bridge it. These discussions have thrown the bridge. It is still very thin and insecure. Nevertheless, some have braved it and crossed the gulf. With them, the core of the party will grow stronger.

Somebody disparaged the idea of philosopher-kings. This is not the first time I have spoken about it. Since Plato suggested the idea, nothing more pointed has been said to prove that freedom is possible. Now, you do not have to go by Plato nor by me. A little reflection makes it clear that the idea of the proletarian dictatorship can be accepted by honest and intelligent fighters for freedom only if it is conceived as a new version of the Platonic idea of philosopher kings. Of course, the term "kings" was determined by the prevailing political notions of the time; it has no application to-day; we are concerned with the idea. The dictatorship of the proletariat is supposed to be the political institution of the transitional period. It must be composed of thoroughly declassed individuals, if proletarian dictatorship is to serve purpose it is expected to; otherwise, it is bound to establish the rule of another class. The people composing the dictatorship, because they come from the proletarian class, may have no scruples in destroying the established bourgeois social order. But as proletarians, representing the interest of a class, which has captured power, they may not also work for the abolition of the rule of that class; they cannot be trusted to abolish their own class. Experience has proved that the revolutionary State the proletarian dictatorship, does not wither away. Whatever may be the nature of economic reconstruction, a class mentality is fostered as moral sanction for the dictatorial regime. Hypothetically, the dictatorship may usher in a higher type of democracy, if only it is wielded by individuals who are completely differentiated from all classes. Only such men can establish a classless society. Of course, in that case it would not be a dictatorship. It is absurd to expect that one particular class can ever establish a classless society. The abolition of capitalism may abolish the proletariat as such; but it is highly doubtful, psychologically, if it is not metamorphosed into a new ruling class.

We talk glibly about declassed intellectuals, meaning that,

unless the intellectuals fully differentiate themselves, spiritually, from the bourgeoisie, they cannot be revolutionaries—advocates of a new social order. Is it not only logical that the same test should be applied to those who are to wield dictatorial power during the transition period? If the proletariat cannot throw up individuals who will also be declassed, its dictatorship cannot possibly usher in a classless society. De-classed intellectuals usually attach themselves to another class—the proletariat; they develop the proletarian mentality. Power in the hands of people having no vested interest alone can guarantee the reconstruction of society as a co-operative commonwealth. It is easy to see that only philosophers, as individuals, can be completely disinterested. The proletariat in power will have as much of vested interest as the bourgeoisie. When the proletariat captures power, it also wants to keep it in its own hand; and if that will mean, in the hands of a few people who also belong to that class, then proletarian dictatorship will be a permanent feature; it will never wither away. When I expressed doubt about the unlimited possibilities of Communism and about the system in the U.S.S.R., I had all these considerations in mind. So, the Radical Democratic Party, in my opinion, in so far as I am a Radical Democrat, proposes eventually to create a group of individuals who will approximate to the ideal of Plato's philosopher-kings, who will approach the ideal conception of declassed proletarians, who can carry into practice the Marxian theory of dictatorship without debasing it and making it a pretext for another form of slavery.

I hope that now you may see how very fundamental is the reason for the existence of the Radical Democratic Party. If you appreciate the greatness of the purpose, and desire to develop the Radical Democratic Party in that direction, you may still need me. Because, in that case I can be helpful. But if it is only for organising political action, solving organisational problems, dealing with changing political situations, and gradually carrying through our plan of action—for that, the party can do very well without me.

So, my request is that you do not go back from this Camp with new organisational problems in your mind. As regards the philosophical questions, treat them as my personal views,

regard them as having no connection with our politics. For a correct appreciation of the international situation and to test our theoretical presuppositions, we had to subject to a critical examination many ideas and ideals we had accepted on their face value. If we have come to some unpalatable conclusions, which may not be liked by some people outside, it is not necessary for us to go and shout them out from the housetops. That was only for us, for our own clarification, to make our own ideas clear to ourselves. Therefore, there is no call for you to be oppressed by the feeling that now we must make propaganda against Communism and the Soviet Union. Nothing of the kind. If that is the case in connection with the questions of political theory, it is all the more so with philosophical problems. You do not have to proclaim publicly that we are against Marxism or revising it or doing any other violence to it; again, that we have become idealists, or no longer believe in the Marxist Theories of Values, for instance. Having discussed philosophical problems, if you feel that our politics should have nothing to do with them, why bother? But if you ever begin to feel that there is a connection, you will remember what I told you in this Camp.

That, I hope, should eliminate all apprehensions regarding our position vis-a-vis the public. Our public attitude towards Communism and the Soviet Union remains as always; only, we are no longer blind believers and followers: we have now a clear idea of how things are developing; and we should try not to measure our merits by their standards. We should try to develop a standard of our own.

As regards remoter theoretical and philosophical questions, let us make one or two observations. With the assumption that nothing newer or more or better can be said in the realm of social thought or economic doctrines or political theories than what Karl Marx wrote hundred years ago, you will naturally be sceptical and critical about whatever I have said. But my appeal to you is : Do not measure my ideas by anybody else's standard. I have told you certain things; they may fit in with Marxism or they may not. I ask you to evaluate what I have said on its own merit. If you think it is good, accept it; otherwise, reject it. But if you say that you must reject my ideas

because they are different from Marxism, your opinion will have neither any value, nor any meaning for me. That will only prove that, having no independent ideas of your own, you are incapable of judging other ideas independently. If I wanted to measure my ideas by what Marx has said, why should I speak to you? I would read Marx and compare. I speak to you because I assume that there is a group of human beings who can think independently; let me submit my thoughts to their judgment. Be critical, as much as you can, but please don't quote scriptures. I am not appealing to them for authority; therefore, they are irrelevant when you judge me. You shall have to judge my ideas on their own merit. If you can do no better than to throw the three volumes of *Capital* at my head, then we are neither here nor there, and it is hardly necessary for us to sit together to compare notes. It was not necessary for me to talk to you for days to find out if I had correctly learned all the sentences of Karl Marx.

For these reasons, I do not think it will be necessary for me to waste your time in replying in detail to a series of questions raised two days ago. They might serve a good purpose if we were discussing Marxism. In that case, I could prove that the comrade who raised the questions understood Marxism wrongly. But for the purpose of convincing him or others of the rightness of what I have said, it is hardly necessary for me to reply to all these questions in detail. Because, we shall be discussing different things, not what I said. I only repeat that our discussion here is not meant to take place on the assumption that we are orthodox Marxists. That assumption would preclude all discussion. Anything that Marx has said must be taken textually and literally, and nothing more can be said about it. Therefore, we should not take it for granted that our discussion takes place on the assumption that we are Marxists. I have expressed my views. You are intelligent people; judge whether they are acceptable to you or not. I ask you to judge intelligently and independently on the merit of the views placed before you. If you believe that Marxism is a revealed wisdom, and that since the time of Marx, human mind has made no progress, and anything else said under the sun is a deviation from Marxism—then, of course, you cannot judge whatever I

said on its merits.

But that is not my attitude towards theoretical and philosophical questions. Whether that is the attitude of the Radical Democratic Party is for you to decide. So, there is hardly any necessity for me to take up these questions point by point, to prove whether or not I am revising Marxism. Moreover, I may mention that in formulating the questions, Marxism has in some places been incorrectly stated. By quoting scriptures, I can also prove that revision of Marxism is inherent in Marxism. Anybody who says that Marxism must not be revised is anti-Marxist. The distinguishing feature of Marxism is its dynamic nature. It is pragmatic and empiricist. It says that ideas are determined by experience; and Marx did not say that all human experience and knowledge came to a stop in 1851. Only I should not use the odious term revision; I prefer to say, amplification, enlargement.

In this context, I may take the liberty of drawing your attention to an assertion made while raising the question whether I was not revising Marxism. It is, that Marxists have enriched Marxism by incorporating all the new scientific knowledge gained since the days of Marx. I am afraid that is not true; the discoveries of modern physics have rendered nineteenth century Materialism completely untenable; yet, the Marxist pandits even to-day fight philosophical criticism based on twentieth century physics by quoting scriptures from Engels' *Anti-Duhring*, written nearly a hundred years ago. Anyhow, once you admit that it is permissible to adjust Marxian theory to human experience made since the days of Karl Marx, then you will come to realise that everything I have said can be fitted into the scheme of Marxism as a philosophy. If that cannot be done, then we shall have to place all the works of Marx in the dusty archives, attaching to them nothing more than historical value for to-day or for the future.

It has been contended here that, proletarian dictatorship is a fundamental tenet of Marxism. Marx did not hold that. However, I am not alone to have departed from that tenet; the crime has been committed much more glaringly by the orthodox Marxists and Communists. Everywhere they are entering into coalition governments; and nowhere are they establishing

proletarian dictatorship. Is it honest to do things entirely contradictory to one's theoretical presuppositions and fundamental tenets, and yet insist that the latter are final truths? That is intellectual dishonesty, and if that is really a fundamental tenet of Marxism, I shall be glad to admit that I am not such a Marxist.

It has also been asserted that the withering away of the State is a fundamental tenet of Marxism. One has to be a day-dreamer to hold on to that dogma. Is there any sign of that miracle happening in the Soviet Union? There, the State is getting stronger from day to day. Either we must hang on to exploded theories which lead to blind faith, or learn from experience, which may compel us to revise our theory.

We must take it for granted that Karl Marx honestly believed that under Socialism class distinctions would disappear, and therefore the State as a class organisation wither away. But one cannot help feeling that that was a naive belief; it was wishful thinking. How could a keen intellect be reconciled to such a belief? The zeal to prove that Communism was not a utopia which lured Marx away towards the uncertain ground of speculation, and he made a dogma out of speculative thought. So long as a stateless society remained inconceivable, Communism could not be anything but a utopia. Therefore, for the sake of his "Scientific" Socialism, Marx had to postulate the withering away of the State. Either, at the point, Marx came very near to anarchism—also a utopia—or he did not think hard enough. The State is the political organisation of society. How could a complicated, centralised, industrial society be ever without a State? This question should have occurred to Marx while he was casting the horoscope of humanity. As it is, he set up a number of hypotheses, and these are getting exploded. Is it, then, still Marxism to stick to those hypotheses as final truths? That is not Marxism. If Marx returned in our midst, he would say that, a hundred years ago, he anticipated history to move according to a certain pattern, but since that did not happen, and things developed differently, what he said a hundred years ago does not hold good any longer and is to be rejected.

I do not want to be a bastard of Karl Marx. I want to be his spiritual descendant. Only in that sense can Marxism be

the philosophy of the future and claim to be the only system of human thought which defies the danger of dogmatism and can develop with the development of human society. I conceive Marxism in that way, and therefore I call myself a Marxist, even when I do not recognise the authority of Marxian scriptures and scholasticism.

This heart-searching was necessary in order to free ourselves from certain subconscious inhibitions, which are preventing the internal development of our party. Yesterday we discussed organisational problems. They have been placed in their proper setting by competent comrades. I think that it is not a simple psychological problem; it is a psycho-pathological problem. It grows out of certain inhibitions in our subconscious mind, which harbours a double psychosis. But henceforth we shall live in a different political atmosphere; it should be possible for us to get over the psychoses, if we are serious about Radicalism. With the disappearance of Imperialism, the historical basis of the nationalist psychosis is gone. Consequently, it should be possible for us to get over that psychosis. It is no longer necessary for us to measure us with the nationalist standard, whether our politics is sufficiently racial and chauvinistic. Because, to be anti-British was the standard of revolutionary purity of politics in the nationalist atmosphere. As our politics was non-racial, it was not considered revolutionary enough. But this atmosphere is changing now. Therefore, the nationalist standard need no longer be our measure. I hope that it will no longer be necessary to dig out the serpent of nationalist psychosis, and to that extent the internal life of our party will be normalised and rationalised. We shall be free from a guilty conscience.

But the other psychosis still remains, and that is also to a great extent of the same nature. Communism in our country became fashionable with a section of the students, because it appeared to be the most extreme form of nationalism and racialism. The people who call themselves Communists in this country have forgotten Communism, if they ever really knew what it was. For the last twenty years, Communism in this country has been identified with anti-Imperialism, which is the political creed also of the nationalist movement. The political

programme of the so-called Communist Party of India has for years been United National Front, which will necessarily include the capitalist patrons of nationalism. The literature of the C.P.I., dealing with the Indian political situation, has little to say about Communism; it is all anti-Imperialism. Any Marxist who has read his text-books should know that there is no longer any British Imperialism for the Indians to fight. It can now serve only as a bogey for the benefit of those who want to hoodwink the Indian masses. The Communists have been playing that game. We have learned from Lenin all about Imperialism; anti-Imperialism is not Marxism: it is Leninism. Marx appreciated Imperialism as a revolutionary factor; he said that the British conquest of India had historically a revolutionary significance. Marx also said that capitalism historically had a progressive role to perform. Imperialism is the highest form of capitalism. If capitalism in its earlier stages has a progressive role to play, how does it lose that role in its higher stages? I want to know if Marxism prohibits its votaries from having the most elementary understanding of logic?

Anyhow, Lenin held that modern Imperialism was based on the export of capital. If that is so, then it logically follows that, with the reduction of export of capital, Imperialism begins to decline, and decolonisation of the colonial countries commences. During the year following the first world war, the export of capital from Britain fell heavily. In 1922, there was an actual deficit in Britain's balance of overseas trade. I was the first to point out that epoch-making fact. That was one of my major crimes in the eyes of Communist orthodoxy; I should say bigotry. For twenty years, I have been vilified as the father of the "De-colonisation Theory". But history goes its own way. What I anticipated so many years ago, is actually happening to-day. If the theory of decolonisation was a revision of Marxism then, history is belying Marx; my crime was that twenty-five years ago I anticipated it. I could do that because I understood my Marx, and my Lenin. It was not my original wisdom; a little intelligence enabled me to understand what I was reading. Lenin said that, in a certain stage of its development, capitalism created more new capital than could be invested at home with a sufficient rate of profit. For getting a higher rate of profit,

the unemployed capital was exported to other countries; that was the basis of modern Imperialism. From that, as students of logic, we can draw the conclusion that if one day this flow of capital from one country to another ceased, then an imperialist country would cease to be so in course of time. Because, another tenet of Marxism is that, under its own contradictions, capitalist economy is bound to break down.

Britain having ceased to export capital already more than twenty years ago, I came to the conclusion that the process could not be arrested. Unless we believed that capitalism was indestructible, unless we believed in the bourgeois economic doctrine that, given *laissez faire*, the law of supply and demand will operate and capitalism stabilise itself again and again, we should anticipate a breakdown of capitalist economy in Britain. There would be temporary recoveries and zigzags. But the general trend would be downwards. From that analysis, I came to the conclusion that the colonial economy of India, based on British capital, would necessarily change its character, and a process of decolonisation would take place. And as a corollary to that, I wrote that decolonisation in the economic field must have a political repercussion; eventually, British Imperialism would find itself faced with the necessity of transferring power to the Indian bourgeoisie. In the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920, I pressed this point of view as against Lenin, who believed that the bourgeoisie in the colonial countries must still play a revolutionary role. Why? Because the bourgeoisie in Europe had done so. But is it Marxism to say that a class plays exactly the same role, no matter in what part of the world or in what period of history? That is metaphysics, not Marxism. It means that there are social factors which transcend time and space.

Lenin's understanding of these problems was metaphysical and idealistic. I pointed out to him that, under the given world conditions, the Indian bourgeoisie might be anti-British, but they could not be revolutionary; that racialism was not a revolutionary sentiment. I explained why the Indian bourgeoisie could not be revolutionary; not because of any inherent inferiority, but because the contradiction between Indian capitalism and British Imperialism would disappear in course of

time, and consequently the political conflict between the two would also be composed eventually. An eventual compromise between decayed Imperialism and bourgeois nationalism was a foregone conclusion. Is that not happening to-day? Imperialism is transferring power to the nationalists, who have been fighting it ineffectually all these years. It was not Royism, as it used to be called. It was not my wisdom. In those days, I believed in Marxism as a dogma, and having read my Marx, I came to those conclusions; history has corroborated them. Therefore, I maintain that my philosophical views as well as the politics of the Radical Democratic Party are Marxist; whereas the Orthodox Communists of to-day are non-Marxists, philosophically as well as politically.

If the Communists were Marxists, they should have realised already twenty years ago that the foundation of British Imperialism was undermined. The temporary stabilisation was artificial, though it induced some orthodox Marxists to talk of a second industrial revolution, out of which capitalism would be reborn. Except those who took that revisionist and non-Marxist view, all Marxists should have seen already then, before the rise of Fascism, that Imperialism was a passing phenomenon. The Communists at least should have anticipated the passing of Imperialism. In that case, they should have acted in an entirely different manner, to prepare the people for the real revolutionary struggle on the home front. But they forgot all about class struggle, and called fanatically for a united national front. Their action, in cross contradiction to their theories, exposed them as nationalists. They might talk of social reconstruction, internationalism and what not; but really they also wanted only the British to get out.

Nevertheless, anti-Imperialism has sunk deep in the subconscious of many of you. But Imperialism is no longer there. Now the battles for freedom must be fought on the home front. The verdict of history is that the Radical Democratic Party alone is qualified to lead the Indian people in the coming battles for freedom. Why should you even now be haunted by the nightmare of unpopularity and isolation? Now that the external enemy is gone, the people are bound to be attracted by our ideas of revolution, our perspective and our programme.

As revolutionaries, we should have the conviction that now we are going to isolate those people who have been dominating the political scene so long by deceiving the people and distracting their attention to false issues. So long as the ghost was there, we could not help it. Now the ghost has disappeared, and if others are still able to deceive the people by raising the ghost of a ghost, do not call yourselves revolutionaries! Close your shop and find some other occupation! If you cannot conceive of your isolating the demagogues, then you cannot conceive of the possibility of a revolution in India. The cause of the camouflaged nationalist-Communist psychosis having also been removed by the march of historical events, you have no longer any reason, even imaginary, to have a guilty conscience. Shake off your psychosis, and all lack of enthusiasm will disappear; the organisational problems of the party will also be solved.

It is a good augury that the conclusion of our Camp coincides with the formal passing of the ghost of Imperialism. Today is the day of our deliverance. We shall be delivered from the psychoses, which have been stultifying our revolutionary vigour and undermining our revolutionary conviction. We shall no longer be enslaved revolutionaries—enslaved by our own dogmas, prejudices and preconceived ideas. We are free revolutionaries, and only as free men can we free others. We should send hearty congratulations to the British Cabinet Mission on their success. When the Cripps Mission failed in 1942, we were glad, because, if Cripps had succeeded, India would to-day be ruled by Subhas Bose as Hitler's Gauleiter. In that case, Comrade Cripps could not have come again to hand over power exactly to those people who would have preferred to welcome the Japanese army of liberation. Nevertheless, we are glad that this time he has succeeded. Because, henceforth, we shall not be in any way handicapped in the fight against Indian Fascism, installed in power by the British Labour Government.

India is on the threshold of national independence; but who is free in this country? Who can say that to-day is the day of our deliverance? Only the Radical Democratic Party. This day of deliverance belongs to the members of the Radical Democratic Party, because only we can appreciate this freedom,

and we alone can go to the people and tell them that this is only the beginning, there will still have to be a revolution, and then they will also be free. Until now, the Radical Democratic Party was Prometheus bound; after this Camp, the Radical Democratic Party will appear on the Indian political scene as Prometheus unbound. That is the message which you must take from this Camp to the entire membership of the party; and if you can deliver that message with conviction to every single member of the party, all organisational problems will be solved, and the entire party will plunge into activity with new vigour, new enthusiasm and a new perspective.

A NEW ORIENTATION*

A year has passed since the ruinous clash of arms formally ceased in Europe. The military operations against Japan also ended in a victory much earlier than expected. Tortured and tormented for years ever since Fascism seized power in a series of countries, the world heaved a sigh of relief, hoping for an early peace, to be followed by political and economic reconstruction on the basis of the grand democratic alliance which rescued mankind from the deadly grip of fascist barbarism. Hardly a year after the memorable day of deliverance, the great expectations seem to have disappeared, leaving civilised humanity bewildered by the recriminations amongst the victorious Powers, and dazed by the dread of yet another world war, which may come, perhaps sooner than the anxiously anticipated peace. The international situation is not only drifting towards a dangerous direction; those who were expected to be the saviours of a war-worn world seem to be pushing it recklessly to the very brink of a perilous precipice. If the present chaos of international relations continues, any day the hapless world may go over, in a deadly crash, from which there will be no recovery.

All thoughtful believers in a bright future of humanity must be deeply perturbed by the gloomy perspective. But they must not simply stand aghast, paralysed by the feeling of helplessness amounting to fatalism. They must think furiously, so as to lay

* Statement on the international situation, issued by the Central Political Council of the Radical Democratic Party of India, on the basis of the discussion in the Political Camp held at Dehradun from May 8th to 18th, 1946.

bare the cause of the malady threatening the very existence of the civilised world, and act bold to exterminate the cause. To begin with, the voice of reason must be raised, warning the progressive world against the different varieties of orthodoxy and blind passion which are creating an atmosphere of veritable madness. It is singularly thoughtless and almost criminally irresponsible to take up the fatalistic view that yet another war is inevitable, and to hold that it will finally dissolve the old world and clear the ground for the raising of a new. This view may be erroneously conceived being in accordance with the Marxist doctrine of economic determinism. In reality, however, it betrays a woeful ignorance of the dynamics of human culture, and represents cynicism of the unfounded conviction that the so-called "pre-history" is bound to be ruled by the law of the jungle.

If the final triumph of world revolution is conditional upon yet another war, then, the fanatical forces of revolution are heading towards a pyrrhic victory. One does not require a very high degree of imaginativeness to realise that another world war will have the most disastrous consequences, most probably amounting to a complete breakdown of modern civilisation. Greatest possible efforts must be made to head off that threatening catastrophe. Since it is practically certain that nationalist India will be a willing party to another world war, the Radical Democratic Party pledges itself resolutely to co-operate in all international efforts undertaken with the object of saving the world from the catastrophe.

While so pledging itself, the Radical Democratic Party of India declares that the object can be attained only by replacing antiquated political doctrines and theoretical postulates about a utopia which history has mercilessly exploded. Neither "Western Democracy" (even in the refurbished form of democratic Socialism) nor "Russian Communism" can head off another war towards which the world is drifting rapidly, as it were by fate. The unseemly squabbles between the British and Russian delegates to the recent international conferences do not permit any other conclusion. Neither of the rivals provides a sufficiently inspiring leadership to the progressive forces of the world. One has only a threadbare institutionalism to offer

as the panacea for all evils; the other, on the contrary, still holds out an ideal which, having been attained, has lost all the glamour of utopia, and appears to be repelling for all who fought to free the world from totalitarian power and spiritual régimentation.

The progressive world pursuing the ideals of democratic freedom and economic equalitarianism, and cherishing the human heritage of cultural values, is torn between the two rivals for the leadership of post-war Europe. In the absence of a common code of behaviour and standard of values, there can be no unity of purpose, and therefore no cooperation. The result is the present atmosphere of tormenting doubts, corroding suspicions and cynical efforts to stab each other in the back, and the general instability, and fear of an impending catastrophe. At this gravest crisis of its entire history, the civilised world needs a new hope, a new faith, a new ideal, to inspire a new philosophy of revolutionary theory and practice suitable for the prevailing conditions.

Fascist Germany was the spearhead of European reaction. Its defeat heralded the dawn of a new era for Europe. The post-war period was to be a period of reconstruction on the basis of really democratic social relations. The development might not be uniform, some countries going ahead of others. But the older order would be no more. It was expected that the Anglo-Soviet alliance would be the backbone of a new democratic Europe. The expectation was reinforced when Labour came to power in Britain, in the wake of the military defeat of Fascism. Such a reconstruction of Europe could not take place on the basis of capitalism. Political democracy must be fortified by an economic system free from the profit motive of powerful vested interests. Rising out of the ashes of Fascism, Europe must march towards social democracy. Before Labour's advent to power in Britain, the leadership for post-war Europe marching towards social democracy could come only from the Soviet Union. Consequently, a polarisation of the international forces in the post-war world was to be expected.

Already in earlier years of the war, when Fascism marched from victory to victory, the choice before Europe was between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Britain was heroically holding out

against triumphant Fascism. But either the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R. or both of them, as happened ultimately, must come in if Europe, including Britain herself, was to be saved. The U.S.A. came in earlier, though no more voluntarily than the U.S.S.R. The latter's participation, however, was politically predetermined; it was in the nature of the war, so to say. Strategically, it was palpable, almost self-evident, that, without the participation of the Red Army, Germany could not be defeated. In consequence of that strategic position, the Soviet Union was destined to be the leader of European democracy liberated from fascist slavery. Under Soviet leadership, Europe would be bound to break away from the moorings of capitalism, and steer her course towards Socialism.

But the U.S.A. had also appeared in the European scene, though only on the periphery. American diplomatic relations with Vichy and subsequently the Darlan affair and Italian armistice, clearly indicated the direction to which the U.S.A. would pull if it got a hand in European reconstruction. As the only capitalist country sure, as such, to survive the war, the U.S.A. would naturally try to save Europe also for capitalism, by restoring the *status quo ante bellum*. Consequently, all the conservative and reactionary elements of Europe, anxious to go over to the winning side before it was too late, hailed the U.S.A. as the liberator. There began a process of polarisation, as between the U.S.A. promising restoration of the capitalist *status quo*, and the U.S.S.R. heralding a new social order.

Had Britain survived the war as an imperialist power, the scale might have been tipped in favour of the U.S.A. The passing of British Imperialism is one of the revolutionary, liberating, consequences of the war. The advent of the Labour Government reinforce the position of the U.S.S.R. in the contest for the leadership of post-war Europe. The military defeat of the fascist powers, therefore, opened up a perspective of high hopes and great expectations.

Before long, the hopes were dashed and expectations belied. Every conference of the Great Powers, allied in the war against the fascist Axis, became a scene of bitter recriminations between the representatives of the British Labour Government and of the Communist Soviet Union. The U.S.A. appeared to sit on the line waiting for the time to play the laughing third.

How did that tragedy happen ?

The facts are generally known. There has been bungling on both sides. But the familiar explanations are not convincing. It is easy enough to denounce Bevin as a "Social-Fascist", and accuse the Labour Government of continuing the traditional foreign policy of imperialist Britain. That is absurd. With as much apparent force, one could say that, in foreign policy the Soviet Government is also stepping into the shoes of Czarist Russia. On the other hand, the psychological explanation of Soviet foreign policy is also not convincing.

There was a time when every apparently aggressive or otherwise questionable move (such as the pact with Nazi Germany) of Soviet foreign policy could be explained as motivated by a justifiable anxiety for self-defence. One could plausibly maintain that the Capitalist Powers would seize the first opportunity to attack concertedly the sole Socialist State and overthrow it. Until the outbreak of the war, the U.S.S.R. was in that danger, though for propagandist purposes it was often magnified. But the war has not only smashed the spear-head of European reaction; it has also undermined the position of the capitalist powers, with the sole exception of the U.S.A. Consequently, the U.S.S.R. is no longer in the danger of an eventual concerted attack by the capitalist world. The only possible enemy, still capable of undertaking a military crusade against Socialism, is geographically not in a position to launch an attack on the Soviet Union in the near future. The anxiety for security against a world of enemies, therefore, can no longer be the motive of Soviet foreign policy. Nor can it be the fear complex created by past experience. To-day the Soviet Union possesses the strongest army of the world. The consciousness of power derived, from that fact should remove the fear complex and give a feeling of security.

For all these considerations, the psychological explanation of post-war Soviet policy is not valid. One is compelled to search for a motive other than anxiety for security. The clue to the apparent enigma is to be found in the fact that invariably Soviet foreign policy clashes with the British view. Its purpose is believed (by its apologists) to be to counter the sinister design of British Imperialism which, even under the Labour

Government, is said to be trying to marshal all the reactionary forces of the world for an eventual war against the Soviet Union. If that is really the purpose of Soviet foreign policy, then, it is fighting a bogey. Assuming that even the Labour Government is pursuing an imperialist anti-Soviet policy, one must raise the most obvious question : Is Britain in a position to wage a large-scale war in the near future? Only those who are labouring under a die-hard obsession would answer the question in the affirmative.

There can be another explanation of the post-war Soviet foreign policy. It is diplomacy on the pattern of Napoleonic strategy : Elimination of the enemies, one by one pick out the weaker enemy, deliver him a smashing blow, and then turn upon the stronger. The Soviet Government can pursue this Napoleonic diplomacy on the assumption that the Labour Government is also imperialist. Indeed, that precisely is the point of departure. Apart from the absurdity of the guiding belief, the Napoleonic foreign policy of the Soviet Government is evidently short-sighted, if not stupid. If British Imperialism, notwithstanding the Labour Government, is still functioning as the spearhead of world reaction, which is being marshalled for an eventual attack on the Soviet Union, it must be backed up by the mightiest capitalist Power, namely, the U.S.A. In the case of a show-down between the Soviet Union and the bogey of British Imperialism, the might of the U.S.A. will certainly be thrown in the scale on the side of the latter.

If the Russian leaders entertain any illusion in that respect, if they believe that the U.S.A. will be a passive spectator in an Anglo-Soviet war, then, they are living in the fool's paradise. Yet, there is no other explanation of the Soviet foreign policy which picks up quarrels with the British Government practically on every issue of the post-war international relations. Fear complex no longer motivates it. On the contrary, the provocative policy is pursued presumably with the belief that Britain cannot risk a war, and on the background of a new polarisation of the European situation. The Soviet conflict with Britain is not due to the Labour Government pursuing an imperialist anti-Russian policy. It results from the possibility of Britain, under the Labour Government, offering an alternative leader-

ship to post-war Europe. The recurring diplomatic clashes—accentuated by a propaganda offensive, are the reflex of a conflict of political ideas and, in the last analysis, of philosophies.

The ideological polarisation of Europe as between the democratic Socialism of the British Labour Government, and dictatorial Communism advocated by the Russians, and their proteges in other countries, to-day over-shadows the historic choice between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Should the ideological conflict lead to an armed conflict, the future of Europe and of the world as a whole would be dark, indeed. The U.S.A. might emerge out of that tragedy as the laughing third, and finally succeed in the hitherto miscarried effort of restoring the *status quo ante bellum*.

For the moment, the tragedy appears to be inevitable. The drama of post-war Europe seems to be unfolding with the fatality of the Greek tragedy. On the one hand, wedded to the dogma of the dictatorship of a monolithic party, which may be camouflaged for tactical reasons, the Communists in Russia and their allies abroad simply would not believe in the *bona fides* of others who hold that Socialism could be established democratically. On the other hand, honestly progressive elements throughout Europe, who have lost faith in the capitalist order and are therefore ready to cooperate in the building of a new society, are repelled by the idea of dictatorship, particularly after having suffered and sacrificed so much in the bitter struggle against Fascism. Nor would the numerous army of confirmed Socialists in the countries with a democratic tradition, countenance any kind of dictatorship. And there does not seem to be any hope of a synthesis or reconciliation of the conflicting views.

The plan of a united International holds out little promise. The political history of Europe during the last quarter of a century and more was embittered by an endless recrimination between the Social Democratic and Communist Parties. The regrettable tradition cannot be obliterated. Because, it was not a superficial difference. The notions of democracy and dictatorship are mutually exclusive; they are logically associated with conflicting philosophies and antithetical codes of ethics and social behaviour.

Drawing inspiration from the humanist tradition, the democratic Socialists, or Social-Democrats (the contemporary world makes no place for any other brand of democrats), visualise social organisation as a harmony of voluntary individual efforts. The free individual discharges social obligations not under any compulsion, nor as a homage to the exacting god of a collective ego, but out of a moral conviction which grows from the consciousness of freedom. The idea of dictatorship, on the contrary, marks a complete break from the cultural heritage of modern civilisation. It is a negation of all the social and ethical values which have given expression to the liberating urge of mankind ever since the man of the Renaissance rose in revolt against spiritual regimentation under the banner of the Christian Church, and temporal totalitarianism of the Holy Roman Empire.

That being the case, a reconciliation of the two ideologies which are dividing the world in two antagonistic camps, is not possible. Nor can the one eventually overwhelm the other by winning the loyalty of a decisive majority. Because, both are defective, much too inadequate to meet the requirements of the contemporary world. Both have been discredited, more or less, in experience.

The theory and practice of dictatorship, even as the means to an end, is repugnant. But, on the other hand, the limitations of parliamentary democracy can no longer be ignored. Under it, civil liberties can be reduced to mere formalities. Without accepting the Marxist view that parliamentary democracy is also a class dictatorship (of the bourgeoisie), a view which cannot be easily disposed of, critical students of modern history should be able to see that the inadequacies of parliamentary democracy are inherent in itself. In the highly complicated modern industrial society, individual citizens particularly, those belonging to the majority labouring under economic disadvantages, have very little chance of exercising effectively the sovereign right which formally belongs to them. Law gives them little protection, particularly in critical times. It is an indisputable fact that under the parliamentary system democracy cannot control the executive. Between two elections, it is completely out of the picture. During that period, a party

having a majority in the parliament can *legally* assume dictatorial power. The guarantee against such a possible abuse of power, attainable with democratic sanction, is not legal. The guarantee is provided by the moral sense of the majority party. Thus, parliamentarism as such cannot defend democracy, and guarantee civil liberties, under all circumstances.

Not only Hitler rose to power "democratically". The history of the last quarter of a century records the experience of many a country where dictatorships claimed democratic sanction, though they kicked off the ladder after having attained power. Even in a country like Britain, with the longest and most deeply ingrained democratic tradition, the possibility of dictatorship being established with a parliamentary sanction could be headed off only by the implied threat of revolution. The fear of the people rising in revolt is the check on the temptation of the majority party assuming dictatorial power. To assert its sovereign right fully, democracy will have to go beyond the limits of parliamentarism. That means, parliamentarism does not give the fullest scope to democracy.

This fundamental defect of parliamentary democracy results from the contradiction between the philosophy and political practice of Liberalism. While, true to its humanist tradition, Liberalism proclaims freedom of the individual, its economic doctrine of *laissez faire*, with the political corollary, places the individual in a helpless position in the wilderness of cut-throat competition. In such circumstances, individualism becomes a mere word. The political and social practice of Liberalism having negatived the moral excellence of its philosophy, parliamentary democracy was bound to be discredited. If that was not the case, the stormy rise of Fascism could not be rationally explained. Fascism grew out the crisis of parliamentary democracy, within the limits of which the social and economic problems confronting Europe in the inter-war period could not be solved. In order to survive Fascism, democracy must outgrow the limitations of formal parliamentarism based on an atomised and therefore helpless electorate. An organised democracy, in a position to wield a standing control of the State, should be the political foundation of the new social order. By reorientating itself in this direction, democratic Socialism will

open up before the modern progressive humanity a new vista of political and economic reconstruction, which will neither postulate an indefinite period of blood and tears, nor be clouded by doubts about the alternative course of peaceful development.

The events in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe are shaping on this new pattern, although the scene is dominated by the Russians who still remain formally wedded to the dogmas of dictatorial Communism. In practice, the Russians have proved themselves to be realists enough to admit that the dictatorship of the Communist Party may not be the only instrument of revolution, in every country, under all circumstances. Once upon a time, coalition government was anathema for the doctrinaire Communists. Now they are forming coalitions with other parties, and are thus deviating from orthodoxy with the sanction and under the guidance of the high-priests of Communism.

Let the champions of democratic Socialism be also somewhat less doctrinaire and more realistic. They should see that parliamentarism of the British model may not be the best form of democratic government under all circumstances. Indeed, there is no set pattern of parliamentarism. The French system, for instance, differs from the British, and the American from both. Once the practice of one-party rule is abandoned, why should not each country be allowed to evolve its own form of democratic State, determined by its peculiar conditions? Toleration is a basic principle of the democratic view of life. If the advocates of democratic Socialism, particularly the British Labour Government, took up a less doctrinaire and more tolerant attitude, the international tension may relax, allowing progressive humanity a chance to react independently to the contemporary crisis and conflict of ideologies, to find the new philosophical orientation, which is the crying need of our time.

It will not, indeed, be a new philosophy. The store of cultural values, piled up since the dawn of civilisation, is far from being exhausted. That precious heritage of the past provides a solid foundation for the magnificent structure of the future dreamt alike by romanticists or revolutionaries, idealists or utopians. If the germs of Socialism or Communism grew in

the womb of the capitalist society, then the inspiration for a truly liberating philosophy for the future should also be found in the moral and spiritual values of the so-called bourgeois culture. No Marxist could disagree, without belying the master. To be true to their liberal tradition, the democratic Socialists should also find the ways and means to enable individual citizens to stand out in sovereign dignity, which is not attainable within the limits of formal parliamentarism based on atomised electorates.

The philosophy which will give modern mankind a new hope and a new faith must put a concrete content into the ideal of freedom. If the liberating possibility of social organisations and political institutions is still to be judged by divergent ideological prejudices, discordant doctrines and conflicting dogmas, common efforts for overcoming the present crisis, the greatest in history, and for promoting human progress, will remain a matter of wishful thinking. A common measure of freedom alone can make such common effort possible. Guided by the dictum of ancient wisdom, that man is the measure of everything, the philosophy for the future should proclaim that the merit of any pattern of social organisation or political institution is to be judged by the measure of freedom it gives to the individual.

Dictatorship of any form, however, plausible may be the pretext for it, is excluded by this perspective of social evolution. Politics cannot be divorced from ethics without jeopardising the cherished ideal of freedom. It is a fallacy to hold that the end justifies the means. The truth is that immoral means necessarily corrupt the end. This is an empirical truth. In the Soviet Union, proletarian dictatorship—the rule of a monolithic party—promises to be a permanent institution. It is identified with Communism. So, the means have become the end. The State does not hold out any hope of withering away, according to the Marxian scheme. If a socialist society has been established in the U.S.S.R., the period of transition has passed. There is no longer any necessity for class dictatorship. But it does not disappear. Why? That is a question which must cause searching of hearts. So long as no other party is allowed to exist, it is idle to say that a higher form of democracy has been established.

The practice of "Western Democracy" is equally disappointing. Insisting on the continuation of that practice, Socialism does not inspire confidence of success. It may succeed in Britain. But the tradition and the prevailing conditions of other countries do not hold out much hope. Consequently, dictatorial Communist practice still has a great appeal there. That is the cause of the Anglo-Soviet tension, which may precipitate another war. Democracy and dictatorship are fighting for the future of Europe, and for the moment it looks like a losing battle for democracy.

To turn the tide, democracy must reorientate itself. It must revert to the humanist tradition of Liberalism. It must not be limited by the counting of heads, particularly, when the heads have not the opportunity to raise themselves with sovereign dignity. In India, for instance, by conventionally pursuing the formal parliamentary democratic practice, the British Labour Government is only helping the establishment of a minority rule which will almost certainly degenerate into a fascist dictatorship.

Formal parliamentarism must be replaced by actual democratic practice. The character of a party must be judged not by its ability to catch votes, but by the merit of its proclaimed principles and published programme. The people should be asked to vote not for professions and promises, but to judge the record of a government. Democratic practice which is no more than mere counting of heads is, in the last analysis, also a homage to the collective ego. It allows scope neither for the individual, nor for intelligence. Under the formal democratic system, unscrupulous demagogues can always come to the top. Intelligence, Integrity, wisdom, moral excellence, as a rule, count for nothing. Yet, unless the purifying influence of these human values is brought to bear upon the political organisation of society, the democratic view of life cannot be realised.

The contemporary world is not poor in men and women incorporating those values of the humanist tradition. But disdaining demagogy, they can never come to the helm of public affairs. On the other hand, a dictatorial regime, even if established as the means to a laudable end, discourages the rise of that type. Thus, between formal democracy and dictator-

ship, humanity is deprived of the benefit of having its affairs conducted by spiritually free individuals, and is consequently debarred from advancing towards the goal of freedom.

It is idle to condemn dictatorship on the ground that regimentation precludes the creation of human values, so long as those values are not allowed to influence public affairs even under democratic regimes. Therefore, to wean the unthinking world away from the appeal of dictatorship, postulated as a short-cut, indeed, as the only way to freedom, democracy must recover the humanist tradition of modern culture. Man must again be the measure of things. Intelligence, integrity, moral excellence, wisdom, should be the test of leadership. Democracy can no longer be taken simply for granted. Today all modern men of culture are perturbed by the challenging question: Is democracy possible? The advocates of democratic Socialism, while rightly rejecting dictatorship, have so far failed to answer satisfactorily the question of our time. To find the answer, the humanist tradition of modern culture must be traced all the way back to Plato. The fundamental democratic principle—the greatest good to the greatest number—can be realised only when the conduct of public affairs will be in charge of spiritually free individuals who represent none but their own conscience.

Moral sanction, after all, is the greatest sanction. It has been shown above that the real guarantee of parliamentary democracy is not law, but the moral conscience of the majority in power. In the last analysis, dictatorship also rests on a moral sanction,—it claims to be the means to an end. But group morality is a doubtful guarantee against the temptation of power. Values operate through the behaviour of individuals. Therefore, government composed of spiritually free individuals, accountable to their respective conscience, is the only possible guarantee for securing the greatest good to the greatest number.

Democracy must have that philosophical reorientation, if it is to survive the present crisis, and resist the powerful onslaught of dictatorship. The attempt to resist the onslaught by other means, such as the creation of a Western Democratic Bloc, will only lead to war, and another war will destroy modern civilisation with all its cherished cultural values.

What is suggested is not *ad hoc* establishment of a rule by

Pareto's "intellectual elite", but such an organisation of the democratic society as will give unlimited scope for the unfolding of the creative genius of man, and place executive power of the State under the control of free intellectuals—free from the influence of vested interests and also from the vagaries of the collective ego so very susceptible to demagogic appeals. For this purpose, democratic practice should not remain limited to periodical elections. Even if elections are by universal suffrage, and the executive is also elected, democracy will still remain a formality. Delegation of power, even for a limited period, stultifies democracy. Government for the people can never be fully a Government of the people and by the people, and the people can have a hand in the Government of the country only when the pyramidal structure of the State will be raised on a foundation of organised local democracy. The primary function of the latter will be to make individual citizens fully conscious of their sovereign right and enable them to exercise the right intelligently. The broad basis of the democratic State, coinciding with the entire society, will be composed of a network of political schools, so to say. The right of recall and referendum will enable organised local democracy to wield a direct and effective control of the entire state machinery. They alone will have the right to nominate candidates for election. Democracy will be placed above parties representing collective egos. Individual men will have the chance of being recognised. Party loyalty and party patronage or other forms of nepotism will no longer eclipse intellectual independence, moral integrity and detached wisdom.

Such an atmosphere will foster intellectual independence dedicated to the cause of making human values triumph. That moral excellence alone can hold a community together without sacrificing the individual on the altar of the collective ego, be it the nation or the class. People possessed of that great virtue will command the respect of an intelligent public, and be recognised as the leaders of society automatically, so to say. Demagoguery will be placed under a heavy discount. Mechanical counting of heads will cease to be the criterion of democracy. Democratic practice will not be reduced to periodical elections.

It will be some time before reorientated democracy can be

the master of the situation. In the transition period, the Constitution should provide for creative genius, intellectual detachment and moral integrity occupying a high place in the State, so as to advise, guide and influence the operation of executive power. In the transition period, democracy must be elective as well as selective. Until the intellectual and moral level of the entire community is raised considerably, election alone cannot possibly bring its best elements to the forefront, and unless the available intellectual detachment and moral integrity are brought to bear on the situation, democratic regimes cannot serve the purpose of promoting freedom. Firstly, the economic life of society must be progressively freed from the paralysing and corrupting control of vested interests. In consequence thereof, intellectual independence will be accessible to a greater number. Secondly, the latter should be regarded as the most trustworthy custodians of public welfare, and afforded the opportunity to function as such. If, before democracy has come of age, their intrinsically representative character is to be measured by counting heads, society will remain deprived of the best available leadership, which alone can guide it towards true democratic freedom.

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Bearing in mind all these problems and possibilities, the Radical Democratic Party has prepared a Draft of the Constitution of Free India. It eliminates the defects of former parliamentary democracy, and obviates the danger of dictatorship. The British Labour Government was in a position to help India have the benefit of a reorientated democracy. Unfortunately, conventionalism and prejudice overwhelmed wisdom and in the name of democracy, India is placed on the road to Fascism. But the Radical Democratic Constitution was prepared not only for India. It is offered as the model of new democracy, with the hope that progressive world opinion, tormented by doubts and pessimism about the future of mankind, and haunted by the dreadful spectre of a new war, will give it a careful consideration.

1st of June, 1946

